

ON MASTERCLASSES

by

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## Preface

Masterclasses are public forums in which artists teach students before an audience. The audience members not only observe, but also participate in the dialogue by offering suggestions<sup>1</sup> and asking questions. Masterclasses are a phenomenon prevalent in the arts, and their collaborative nature is compelling from a pedagogical perspective; however, there is an absence of scholarly writing on the topic. As a musician and educator, I have been a participant in and an observer of masterclasses. As a scholar of pedagogy, my aim is to employ that experience, in conjunction with educational theory, as a means of establishing a unified theory of masterclasses.

I studied masterclasses in their multiple forms, observing the variation in quality between the students' pre-coaching and post-coaching performances, how the master addressed both the performing student and the audience, the master's ability to communicate effectively with the student and audience, and the master's ability to improvise analysis of musical and technical elements of the student's performance. This analysis will display the potential of masterclasses as an opportunity for collaborative learning, demonstrate a program for successful masterclasses, and provide a template for their study and organization. I will enumerate important steps that should be taken in order to maximize our constructive use of the masterclass approach. I strive to define masterclasses

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<sup>1</sup> The format of Masterclasses is not strict. The amount of audience participation depends on the teacher.

through deconstruction, analysis, and reconstruction in order to demonstrate their potential, viewed through an expansion of pedagogical forms.

The questions that this paper attempts to answer are:

1. "What is a masterclass?"
2. "What is its purpose?"
3. "Does the masterclass setting have pedagogical limitations?"
4. "Can we adapt the masterclass venue to be more flexible and include many teaching styles and ideas?"
5. "Can we improve upon what is commonly done?"
6. "What is unique about it as a learning environment?"

These questions are answered through deconstruction and analysis of the masterclass setting, with an exploration of possible educational theories as a foundation for new masterclass pedagogies.

I write this entire work from the feminine perspective. First, I did this in order to obfuscate the identity of all of the teachers that I observed in my quest to collect information for this project. Second, I did this in order to imagine all of these teaching possibilities from my own perspective rather than from someone else's. I do not have an agenda in writing in this manner, and I hope it does not discourage anyone. I only wish to envisage a future that includes my own perspective.

Chapter one deconstructs the physical elements of masterclasses. I write about the concept of the master, and about the difference between masterclasses, seminars, lectures, and private lessons. I analyze a masterclass's physical aspects including the people involved, the space, props, and time. Chapter two covers the

ideology of masterclasses, including the roles of masters, students, and the audience and how they interact with each other. I write about challenges of being and becoming a master and how her disposition is reflected in the mood and organization of the masterclass. Chapter three is about educational philosophies, theories designed to help masters find their own path toward liberatory ways of teaching, and the role of pedagogical eloquence in masterclasses. Chapter four is a critique of observed master classes. I write about a select group of horn masterclasses that I observed, critiquing the teaching, speaking, performing, and interactions of the master with the student and audience. Chapter five looks at possibilities in masterclasses. I write about what we can do differently to make masterclasses more innovative and tailored to the needs of the students, the audience, and the strengths of the masters.

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## Chapter One: Masterclass Elements

A masterclass is a conceptual class which combines components of other course forms into its structure in order to achieve the transmission of expertise. It uses foundations from private lessons, lectures, and seminars as a basis for creating a fluid, customizable learning environment. Since there is little published inquiry on masterclasses, I examine in depth the few documents existing, and use them to begin the deconstruction of the masterclass elements. I will explore the notion of what makes a master, the role of the students and the class, and the material aspects within different spaces, contrasting them with other types of educational classes in order to define the masterclass as its own genre of class.

### Literature Review

Consider three documents written about masterclasses<sup>2</sup>. “The Etiquette of the Master Class: Improvisation on a Theme by Howard Becker” by Karen Ruhleder and Fred Stoltzfus describes similarities between jazz and teaching improvisation that occur within choral conducting masterclasses at the University of Illinois in

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<sup>2</sup> There are many documents that are called masterclasses which generally fall into three categories. First, there are documents claiming to be masterclasses, but which are really instruction books. These documents use masterclass in their title and are on various topics such as lyric soprano arias, screenwriting, auditioning for acting parts, photography, watercolor painting, guitar playing, brass playing, and identifying antiques. This style of instruction books are useful and are usually written by experts, but they are not masterclasses despite their titles. Second, there are articles written about masterclasses as a historical account of the event. There are accounts of Schoenberg’s composition masterclasses, discussions about specific areas of mathematics, writing, and music composition. Once again, these are not masterclasses, but are more of a narrative, journal entry, or historical account written about masterclasses. Third, there are a great deal of live masterclasses that have been recorded either with both audio and visual, or audio only. These are an excellent source of information and historical preservation of masterclasses. These can be used to observe masterclasses that are either historical or not practical to see live, but they cannot be considered amongst documents that study masterclasses.

Urbana-Champaign. Ruhleder and Stoltzfus refer to the customs of teaching and learning within a masterclass as etiquettes, and write that the students learn from the more experienced members of the masterclass through participation.<sup>3</sup>

*Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design and Learning in the Professions* by Donald A. Schön includes a chapter titled “A Master Class in Musical Performance.” In this chapter Schön details three masterclass examples, but focuses on the minutia of the master and student musical interaction. His purpose in this chapter is to prove how students learn by doing, how they build relationships with masters through their collaboration, and, in a larger sense, how masterclasses are similar in other artistic endeavors.<sup>4</sup> *Horn*, by Barry Tuckwell, includes only two paragraphs about masterclasses. They are:

Master classes, sometimes referred to as “clinics”, are becoming more popular and attract many players and spectators. With this type of event it is not possible, nor is it desirable, to give the same sort of lesson that would be given on a one-to-one basis. The person giving the master class must be able to assess quickly the strengths and faults in the player’s technique and musical approach and comment on these in a way that will be both of benefit to the player and of interest to the onlooker.

A player should never be ridiculed but should receive advice that will help him to perceive ways of improving his technique and style. Care must be taken not to quibble over aspects of playing that may have been taught in a different fashion; this is something to take up with the teacher. The master class may be the only time the player and instructor meet, so it is imperative that the student is given an overall perception of style and understands the physical approaches to playing. The student usually derives great benefit from this sort of public analysis of his playing by a person other than his regular teacher, and it frequently happens that a point that may have been made a hundred times before is grasped for the first time in public.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Karen Ruhleder and Fred Stoltzfus, “The Etiquette of the Master Class: Improvisation on a Theme by Howard Becker” *Mind, Culture and Activity* No. 7 (2000), 190.

<sup>4</sup> Donald A. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987), 175-216.

<sup>5</sup> Barry Tuckwell, *Horn* (London: Halstan & Co. Ltd, Amersham, Bucks, 1983), 195-196.



Tuckwell writes this short, insightful summary of masterclasses from the perspective of a professional performer who gives masterclasses at professional events rather than the perspective of observers such as Ruhleder and Stoltzfus. *Horn* is a concise overview of horn history and ancestry, master players, composers, advice for beginners and aspiring professionals; there is little space to devote to masterclasses.

The fact that these are the only published works in this field, with their diverse perspectives toward masterclasses, indicates that more research should be done on the topic, to explore, in depth, the nature of masterclasses. Tuckwell's summary of masterclasses focuses on how masterclass teaching differs from private lesson teaching, and how the comments need to benefit both the performer and the audience. Ruhleder and Stoltzfus extend the concept of jazz improvisation into improvisational teaching in masterclasses. It is because of this lack of research that I chose to deconstruct the masterclass to discover what it is and what its possibilities are, and to weave these differing perspectives into an overarching form into which variety may be comfortable.

### **Concept of a Master**

Expertise is a combination of knowledge and extensive experience in a particular subject, allowing for the expert to effectively deal with rare or difficult circumstances in that subject. A master has all of the qualities and knowledge of the expert, but additionally has knowledge and experience teaching in their main area,

and is regarded by other experts as an expert.<sup>6</sup> “Two Approaches to the Study of Experts’ Characteristics” by Michelene T. H. Chi offers a proficiency scale with comparisons to others in the field. This elucidates specific qualities of a master while giving inclusive perspective to those involved in a field of study.

Naïve	One who is totally ignorant of a domain.
Novice	Literally, someone who is new – a probationary member. There has been some minimal exposure to the domain.
Initiate	Literally, a novice who has been through an initiation ceremony and has begun introductory instruction.
Apprentice	Literally, one who is learning – a student undergoing a program of instruction beyond the introductory level. Traditionally, the apprentice is immersed in the domain by living with and assisting someone at a higher level. The length of an apprenticeship depends on the domain, ranging from about one to 12 years in the Craft Guilds.
Journeyman	Literally, a person who can perform a day’s labor unsupervised, although working under orders. An experienced and reliable worker, or one who has achieved a level of competence. Despite high levels of motivation, it is possible to remain at this proficiency level for life.
Expert	The distinguished or brilliant journeyman, highly regarded by peers, whose judgments are uncommonly accurate and reliable, whose performance shows consummate skill and economy of effort, and who can deal effectively with certain types of rare or “tough” cases. Also, an expert is one who has special skills or knowledge derived from extensive experience with subdomains.
Master	Traditionally, a master is any journeyman or expert who is also qualified to teach those at a lower level. Traditionally, a master is one of an elite group of experts whose judgments set the regulations, standards, or ideals. Also, a master can be that expert who is regarded by the other experts as being “the” expert, or the “real” expert, especially with regard to sub-domain knowledge. <sup>7</sup>

A master is an expert teacher who is regarded by other experts as having expertise. She is one who sets the standards with reliable judgments in her field, and can deal with particularly rare or difficult scenarios. How does one achieve mastery?

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<sup>6</sup> Michelene T. H. Chi, “Two Approaches to the Study of Experts’ Characteristics” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, ed. K. Anders Ericsson, Neil Charness, Paul J. Feltovich, and Robert R. Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 22.

<sup>7</sup> Chi, “Two Approaches to the Study of Experts’ Characteristics,” 22.

How does one attain the expert level and set the standards for their area of knowledge? Can anyone become a master with hard work, or does one have to first possess the correct genetics? “Two Approaches to the Study of Experts’ Characteristics” presents two conflicting approaches to viewing expertise. The first view of expertise, called absolute, is based on the assumption that the expert possesses greater cognitive functioning because of genetic inheritance. Absolute expertise assumes that innate, inherited talent is the cause of a high level of creativity and skill, especially in music and sports,<sup>8</sup> a modern analogue of Plato’s belief in “natural ability.”<sup>9</sup> Those who possessed an inner truth at birth<sup>10</sup> could develop inner traits through conversation and dialogue to achieve a higher truth.<sup>11</sup>

The relative approach is a second view of expertise which assumes that novices can achieve a level of proficiency and are capable of achieving expertise. “Proficiency level can be grossly assessed by measures such as academic qualifications seniority or years performing the task, or consensus among peers. It can also be assessed at a more fine-grained level, in terms of domain specific knowledge or performance tests.”<sup>12</sup> The goal of the relative approach is to

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<sup>8</sup> Chi, “Two Approaches to the Study of Experts’ Characteristics,” 22; Simonton 1977 and Pascual-Leone 1970.

<sup>9</sup> Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. Allan Bloom (Paris: Basic Books-A Member of The Perseus Books Group), 166-187.

<sup>10</sup> Ray J. Amirault and Robert K. Branson, “Educators and Expertise: A Brief History of Theories and Models,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, ed. K. Anders Ericsson, Neil Charness, Paul J. Feltovich, and Robert R. Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 71.

<sup>11</sup> Amirault and Branson, “Educators and Expertise: A Brief History of Theories and Models,” 71; John Horn and Hiromi Masunaga, “A Merging Theory of Expertise and Intelligence,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, ed. K. Anders Ericsson, Neil Charness, Paul J. Feltovich, and Robert R. Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 587-611.

<sup>12</sup> Chi, “Two Approaches to the Study of Experts’ Characteristics,” 23.

“understand how experts became that way so that others can learn to become more skilled and knowledgeable.”<sup>13</sup> The relative approach to expertise is much more in line with current sensibilities about how we learn and what we are capable of achieving.

Neither of the previous views addresses the importance of the personality and behavior of the individuals in question. The absolute approach vs. the relative approach is really just biology vs. behavior, or nature vs. nurture. In “A Merging Theory of Expertise and Intelligence”, Horn and Masunaga study how behavior and biology work together to get an approach to becoming an expert that uses part genetic part societal influences. Behavioral traits are determined by “a characteristic that persistently distinguishes one individual from another despite variation in the circumstances in which individuals are found. A behavioral trait is a way of behaving that emerges through learning over a course of development.”<sup>14</sup> These traits “may be shaped partly through genetic predispositions, but they are shaped also through societal and cultural influences that involve learning. It becomes characteristic of an individual as development proceeds.”<sup>15</sup>

There are numerous behavioral manifestations of expertise. These are a few of the behavioral traits that help define masters as experts and how experts as a group surpass others in their fields.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 23.

<sup>14</sup> John Horn and Hiromi Masunaga, “A Merging Theory of Expertise and Intelligence,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, ed. K. Anders Ericsson, Neil Charness, Paul J. Feltovich, and Robert R. Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 587.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 587.

<sup>16</sup> Chi, “Two Approaches to the Study of Experts’ Characteristics,” 23.

1. Generating the Best Solutions: Experts tend to generate the best solutions for problems. “Experts solve problems or invent the best design in a shorter amount of time than non-experts.” <sup>17</sup>

2. Detection and Recognition: “Experts can see patterns and features that novices cannot.” <sup>18</sup>

3. Qualitative Analyses: “Experts can see and judge quality in their fields of expertise.” <sup>19</sup>

4. Monitoring: “Experts can more accurately monitor their own skills.” <sup>20</sup>

5. Strategies: “Experts can choose their own learning, and problem solving strategies.” <sup>21</sup>

6. Cognitive Effort: “Experts can retrieve knowledge with a minimum of cognitive effort.” <sup>22</sup>

“Two Approaches to the study of Experts’ Characteristics” defined experts through character traits and contrasted them with others across all fields of study. This is how, in my opinion, they can apply specifically to experts in music. In a musical setting, “Generating the Best Solutions” can involve identifying problems and finding the best solutions in their own performance and while teaching with student performances. They find a way to think about the music that helps solve the problem, or design an exercise to work on the problem. “Detection and Recognition”

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 24.

includes finding patterns within musical structures, which inform listening, teaching, and performing. “Qualitative Analysis” is determining the quality of the music itself, how it can be enhanced, and the quality of the performance. An expert can judge the qualities of a performance, and some experts will value certain qualities over others. While one expert might value rhythmic precision, another might value tone quality, phraseology, or pitch accuracy. An expert can determine if a flaw in any one area hurts the performance as a whole. Experts can “Monitor” their own skills. They can detect errors and strengths in their own performance, comprehension, and ability to teach these skills to others. They can determine if a “Strategy” is working toward their goal efficiently, and if it is not they can modify the strategy. This is especially important in working out their own practice strategies. Experts can use less “Cognitive Effort” to perform the rudiments of their instrument and to read music. Since they can execute these skills with greater automaticity, they have greater cognitive control during performance.

The modern concept of master is that of a specialized expert.<sup>23</sup> They have proven themselves to be master teachers and are considered experts by their peers. Some may have natural ability, some may have studied with master teachers, but they have all achieved the distinction of master through deliberate practice<sup>24</sup> with hours of self-teaching, self-reflection, self-observation, and experimentation.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>24</sup> Amirault and Branson, “Educators and Expertise: A Brief History of Theories and Models,” 83; discussed further in Chapter 3, pg. 41.

<sup>25</sup> Andreas C. Lehmann and Hans Gruber, “Music,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, ed. K. Anders Ericsson, Neil Charness, Paul J. Feltovich, and Robert R. Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 458; further discussion in chapter 3, pg. 43.

Regardless of where they began and how they achieved their master status, they all exude some behavioral tendencies. They are better at problem solving and inventing teaching strategies than others in the field. They can observe and keep track of their own skills more easily. They have better, more reliable judgement and can determine which musical qualities are the most important. They are able to retrieve knowledge, find patterns, and find the best solution to problems they encounter in music-making.

### **Role of the Students**

Students in a masterclass are neither naïve, nor are they novices. These are students who have devoted a great deal of effort to their instruments and are probably in the apprentice-master level on the proficiency scale, although some might still be in the initiate stage. Upper class/advanced undergraduates and motivated graduate students are probably journeymen moving toward expert. Performances by these knowledgeable students provide the opportunity for the master to demonstrate or teach anything relevant or related to performance and pedagogy. They provide the basis for discussion and interaction toward the goal of helping these motivated students achieve expertise. *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* focuses on teaching styles rather than discussing the different performing possibilities.<sup>26</sup>

In a master class in musical performance, a master teacher works with an advanced student who has prepared a piece from the repertoire of his instrument. The teacher tries to communicate something about sense making and sense realizing in the piece at hand but may also communicate

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<sup>26</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 175.

understandings applicable to the performance of other pieces – indeed, to performance in general.<sup>27</sup>

### **Role of the Class**

The class in a university setting is typically comprised of colleagues of the student. Their knowledge levels would range from apprentice to master. In other settings that are less insulated, such as music festivals, academies, conferences, seminars, and symposia, the composition of the audience is more varied. The knowledge levels would also be more varied from naïve/novice to master. They observe the student performances and how and what the master teaches, thereby learning what the student learns as well. The class not only observes, but they can verbalize their observations even if they have a different perspective than the master.<sup>28</sup> This helps the class and student acquire different perspectives on what they may already know, as well as learning ways of teaching. When there is a colleague of the master, that colleague can offer the master feedback and solidarity, in all probability outside of the masterclass.

### **Form of Masterclasses**

The physical form of masterclasses is based around musical presentations by students. The student performs and the teacher teaches based on that performance. The master must quickly assess the strengths and weaknesses of the student and be

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 175-176.

<sup>28</sup> There are two opposing views on this. An older style of teaching did not invite input from the audience, and even viewed it as offensive. Although this is an older style, there are many who still embrace this way of thinking. A younger generation of master tends to think of a masterclass as an interactive event where differing perspectives are welcome.



able to create ways of learning based on that presentation. It is not based on prior experience with the student either in private lessons or in recitals; often this is the only time the teacher and the student will meet.<sup>29</sup> As with private lessons, the teacher can experiment, or try different musical scenarios with the student until both are satisfied with the result. "Skillful practitioners learn to conduct frame experiments in which they impose a kind of coherence on messy situations and thereby discover consequences and implications of their chosen frames."<sup>30</sup> Masters use frame experiments, a kind of spontaneous teaching, to show the student and the class how musical decisions impact the music itself. Sometimes the students' musical decisions are based on what they can achieve technically, and in some cases they will not have thought about the musical implications at all. The master assists the student, reconciling the musical decisions with technical and execution issues. Masters navigate messy situations created by the masterclass setting in which they assist the student with the piece, while using the student and the music as a teaching opportunity for the audience members. The chosen frames are the actual pieces of music that the student chooses to perform. The master facilitates the student's discovery of the implications and consequences of their musical choices within musical phrases on the larger piece of music while making the journey of discovery stimulating for the audience.

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<sup>29</sup> Students in masterclasses are often the private students of the master. This relationship can help the masterclass to be informative for both the student and the teacher, but for the masterclass to be informative for the audience as well, the teacher might begin with the shared experience of the student's current performance.

<sup>30</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 157.

*Educating the Reflective Practitioner* discusses experimentation and discovery as a teaching tool for both the student and the teacher. It contends that a masterclass teacher is more of a coach than a traditional teacher, and discusses what is involved specifically in teaching the student in a musical masterclass.

Here....the teacher confronts a threefold coaching task.

First, he must deal with the substantive problems of performance, drawing for the purpose on many domains of understanding- for example, technical properties of the instrument, acoustics of the physical setting, features of musical structure, style of composition, and details of a composer's life that may hold clues for interpretation. All such issues, together with their implications for the performer's decisions, a coach may communicate not by academic analysis but by a kind of analysis-in-action.

Second, the coach must tailor his understandings to the needs and potentials of a particular student at a particular stage of development. He must give priority to some things and not to others. He must decide what to talk about and when and how to talk about it, deploying for this purpose the full repertoire of media and language at his disposal. He may give verbal advice or criticism, tell stories, raise questions, conduct demonstrations, or mark up the student's score.

Third, he must do all these things within the framework of a role he chooses to play and a kind of relationship he wishes to establish with the student, taking account of the ever-present dangers of vulnerability and defensiveness.<sup>31</sup>

Schön's depiction of a masterclass looks like a private lesson. A private lesson and a masterclass do have a similar master-pupil relationship where the teachers encourage cognitive development through dialogue, conversation, demonstration, experimentation, repetition, and invention. Teachers of both work with problems of performance, and have a multi-faceted understanding of the music such as technical aspects of the instrument: musical style, structure, and interpretative possibilities. They tailor their teaching to the needs and potentials of each particular student, and decide what kind of a relationship to form with each student. Private lesson settings

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<sup>31</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 175-176.

create a one-on-one environment for the teacher and the student to focus intensely on the learning needs of the student without any peripheral distractions, such as an audience. They can collaborate for extended periods of time on anything within the purview of the lesson. This makes it possible for the teacher to shape each lesson to fit the needs of each student without consideration for anyone other than that specific student. Although they have similarities, masterclasses expand the private lesson model to teach many at once and to bring all of the ideas from multiple private lessons together for all of the students in one community space. This is an aspect of masterclasses that Schön does not mention.

Masterclasses are a place to perform and to practice performing in front of an audience of student peers. The teacher then uses that performance as a basis for teaching the whole class about something based on the “analysis-in-action.”<sup>32</sup> During the masterclass there will be multiple performers, and the teacher has a limited amount of time to teach each student, but it is not a time of intense focus as it can be during private lessons. The presence of the audience is both a distraction and a learning tool.

Masterclasses also model lectures and seminars in that they may contain components of lecturing and class discussion. The teacher might lecture briefly on a prepared topic, or she might give a spontaneous lecture that relates to the student performance, but lecturing is not the main teaching tool. Similar to seminar classes, masterclasses can include audience discussion based on a shared experience of the class. Usually this is on a lecture of the teacher, or on the student performance. The

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<sup>32</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 176.

masterclass teacher may be a discussion leader, or the moderator between the performing student and the audience. Just like lecturing, interactive discussion is not the main component of masterclasses as it is in seminar classes/ discussion forums, but using it as one component brings a collaborative and critical thinking element to masterclasses.<sup>33</sup>

Masterclasses incorporate analysis-in-action, lecture, and discussion forums from other class genres, but are distinct from these other classes in that they are based on performances, and that the performing is done in front of an audience. The immediacy of the student-master interaction and the presence of an audience differentiate them from other types of teaching. Masterclasses are a place to practice performing; this is their defining characteristic, guiding and shaping all other aspects of the class.

### **Masterclass Components: Environment**

Masterclasses meet in a flexible space that can be modified for the needs of the master. Ideally, they are in small, intimate recital halls, where the performer is not too removed from the audience so that the audience can hear the spoken comments as well as the performance. Having access to a backstage is important to simulate entering the stage for recitals and auditions.<sup>34</sup> This setting can happen anywhere, and all of these elements can be improvised.

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<sup>33</sup> Amirault and Branson, "Educators and Expertise: A Brief History of Theories and Models," 71. Socratic Method in the modern classroom.

<sup>34</sup> To Practice the Magic Line Theory from F.A.T. camp 2007.

## **Masterclass Components: Equipment**

Some equipment is necessary to make masterclasses efficient. A piano is necessary for accompanying. Wind and string instrumentalists perform orchestral excerpts unaccompanied, but use an accompanist for solo repertoire, and vocalists perform most of their repertoire with accompaniment. Music stands and chairs help with the ease and organization of the class. Appropriate audio and recording equipment is used to play different examples that the master might wish to use for demonstrations.

The most important equipment is the instruments brought by each person. The performer needs her instrument to perform and to experiment with anything that the master might suggest. The master may use her instrument to demonstrate different parts of the music, various techniques, and to show different ways of playing. The audience members rarely need their instruments. Usually, their contribution to the class is their presence and verbal interactions. Occasionally, the master might ask the audience to participate with their instruments in order to demonstrate something that is better learned by doing and feeling. The performer should bring the physical written music for reference even if they have it memorized. It is helpful for the audience to know prior to attending the masterclass what is going to be played, and if possible they should bring their own copies of music or get it from the library to follow along and to write in their thoughts and suggestions during the masterclass. Often the performers play music that is familiar to most of the audience, but when it is unfamiliar, having the music as a guide is

important. If the audience members have a physical copy of the music, their comments can be better directed.

Masterclasses are unique physical teaching forums distinct from private lessons, ensemble coaching, lecture classes, and seminars. They must have a master, performing students, and an audience in order to be a masterclass. They must have a space for performing and teaching, instruments and music for each student, and props for efficiency and ease of demonstrating to a large room. The concept of master is an ancient notion which has developed into a modern intellectual distinction based on knowledge and extensive experience. The master must bring all of her knowledge and experience into the physical reality of the masterclass to teach the students in an improvisational manner while encouraging participation from the class. This improvised, communal, inclusive, participatory style of teaching and learning is remarkable in educational styles and theories.

## **Chapter Two: Masterclass Ideology**

The masterclass is an exceptional teaching and learning experience. It allows the master flexibility to tailor concepts addressing each student and the audience. Masterclasses create situations for improving the general knowledge of a cadre on a specific genre; to educate the room of people in ways of speaking about that genre. They advance the knowledge of teaching and music, as well as socialization and coaching of that knowledge. They are for students to practice performing, observe teaching, and to find camaraderie with others in art while finding inspiration and expertise from a master.

I will address the ideological components of masterclasses, including the problems masters face as they learn how to give masterclasses, how the character of the master is reflected in their class, and the role of the master in the masterclass. Ideological components also relate to the student, being and observing the student performer, their relationship with the audience, and the interaction between the master, students, and audience. Masterclasses must be organized, and all of the elements must be practical, applicable, and flexible. Creating a community within this setting transforms the interactions into relationships and makes masterclasses better learning environments.

### **Challenges of being and becoming a Master**

Since little formalized training for masterclasses exists; masters must refine this important art on their own. Schön describes this as:

nonroutine situations of practice are at least partly indeterminate and must somehow be made coherent. Skillful practitioners learn to conduct frame experiments in which they impose a kind of coherence on messy situations and thereby discover consequences and implications of their chosen frames.” This is a kind of “knowing-in-action” where masters “must learn a kind of experimentation- not “trial and error,” which suggests an absence of reasoned connection between prior errors and subsequent trials, but a thoughtful invention of new trials based on appreciation of the results of earlier moves.<sup>35</sup>

Masters learn how to teach by teaching, remembering how they were taught, experimenting, and using their own experiences as a basis for teaching while assessing their own successes and failures. They have to invent and develop their own style in order to achieve relevant academic goals while looking for non-verbal signs to gauge the effectiveness of their teaching.

## **Disposition**

Masters set the tone for their masterclasses through their disposition or personal style; using tact, compassion, patience, enthusiasm and integrity.<sup>36</sup> For example, a master might be very supportive and able to use compassion, patience, and tact to turn any performance into a positive learning experience. Enthusiasm helps the master convey energy to a large group of people.<sup>37</sup> It shows the master’s excitement for the music and is contagious to the student and the audience. Some masters are excited about the topic and their energy can be contagious; some are more tranquil, setting the mood for a subdued masterclass. Other masters are

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<sup>35</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 157.

<sup>36</sup> Estelle R. Jorgensen, *The Art of Teaching Music* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2008), 35-56.

<sup>37</sup> Jorgensen, *The Art of Teaching Music*, 50-51.



procedural in nature, absorbed with different techniques they can see in every musical scenario. Integrity stems from consistent, truthful, and honorable behavior manifest in how the teacher cares for the students and strives to help students see the whole range of possibilities.<sup>38</sup> Some masters are able to demonstrate their integrity seemingly easily, showing different perspectives and speaking to various philosophies of performing and life while relating these philosophies to a specific piece.<sup>39</sup>

### **Role of Masters**

The primary role of a master is to be a teacher and coach. She is an authority of her art and should strive to achieve the transmission of her expertise. She needs to be familiar with the repertoire, performance etiquette, different styles and performance practices for different pieces in a variety of musical geographies.<sup>40</sup> The role of a master is to teach all of these things to her students. Masters have different stylistic strengths, which will be reflected in the emphases of their masterclasses.

The secondary role of a master is to create and organize the masterclass; to decide on the scope of each class, in terms of the form, pacing, mood, and preparation of the masterclass. She should decide how many students will be performing, if she herself is going to perform, and if she is going to give a lecture

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<sup>38</sup> Jorgensen, *The Art of Teaching Music*, 52-53.

<sup>39</sup> I write about educational philosophies including different methods/styles in chapter 3. Feminist Rhetorical Theories, pg. 29. Howard's teaching through instruction, practice, example and reflection, pg. 38. Improvised and instinctive teaching, pg. 34.

<sup>40</sup> Chi, "Two Approaches to the Study of Experts' Characteristics," 23-24; Paul J. Feltovich, Michael J. Prietula, and K. Anders Ericsson, "Studies of Expertise from Psychological Perspectives," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, ed. K. Anders Ericsson, Neil Charness, Paul J. Feltovich, and Robert R. Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 55-57.

during the class. She should create an effective timeline to allow adequate time for each activity. The pacing of performances and between performances, making sure the students are ready to play can make a class run smoothly.<sup>41</sup> The master needs to be aware of time, during improvised teaching and when opening the class to audience comments.<sup>42</sup>

The tertiary role of a master is to set an appropriate mood for the masterclass. She does this with her personal style. Maintaining a positive setting and respecting the ideas of everyone lets the students know how to treat their colleagues. The master should be mindful of audience comments from the perspective of mood and content as well. Audience comments can be difficult for the performing student to appreciate. The master can help this by filtering and organizing audience comments for the student. She can condense the comments into a few coherent thoughts so that they are applicable to the student. This will codify the comments to make them more useful to audience members as well.

### **Role of Students**

Student masterclass performances are the application of what Schön calls “reflection-in-action.”<sup>43</sup> This is the learning counterpart to “knowing-in-action” displayed by the master. The student absorbs, reflects, and acts upon the experimentation and invention suggested by the master. This is also an opportunity

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<sup>41</sup> Email the schedule, or write it at the front of the room to help with the flow of performers.

<sup>42</sup> An alarm, an audience member, or a proctor could be charged with keeping time. Then, the master can concentrate on teaching.

<sup>43</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 158.

for the student to reflect on their own musical decisions through performance while getting direct feedback on those musical decisions.

The masterclass venue provides an opportunity for students to practice performing. Students deliberately gain knowledge and experience in performance every time they decide to perform in masterclasses.<sup>44</sup> Even with experience and deliberate preparation, any student will face some level of nervousness when performing. Learning how to overcome fear or performance anxiety to allow learning and personal growth is not only something that is important in student performances. It is something that students can learn in masterclasses and take into the world after college; facing the unknown with courage and hope. There are so few places in the world where one can actually learn how to face one's fears and that there is personal growth in facing those fears. This is when masterclasses are an exercise in courage building.

### **Student Performances: Content and Purpose**

Student performances are the framework for masterclasses. They give the student a chance to gain experience performing before an audience, and give masters a starting point for class discussion and demonstration. Everyone in the room experiences this performance, so they all witnessed the art as it was portrayed by the student performer, which can then generate discussion.

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<sup>44</sup> Amirault and Branson, "Educators and Expertise: A Brief History of Theories and Models," 83. The real world is complex and disorganized. Deliberate Practice requires the full mental engagement of the student. Emphasis on cognitive flexibility and non-linear instruction is better for advanced knowledge acquisition and transfer of learning. I write about this more in chapter 3, pg. 36.

*Dialogue of Coach and Student.* In their dialogue, coach and student convey messages to each other not only, or even primarily, in words but also in the medium of performance. The student tries to do what she seeks to learn and thereby reveals what she understands or misunderstands. The coach responds with advice, criticism, explanations, descriptions- but also with further performance of his own.

When the dialogue works well, it takes the form of reciprocal reflection-in-action. The student reflects on what she hears the coach say or sees him do and reflects on the knowing-in-action in her own performance. And the coach, in turn, asks himself what this student reveals in the way of knowledge, ignorance, or difficulty, and what sorts of responses might help her.<sup>45</sup>

## **Role of the Audience**

In a university setting the masterclass audience is made up of peers, friends, and colleagues. Some students find comfort in knowing the audience, making it safer for them to perform,<sup>46</sup> while others find that being familiar with the audience members makes playing for them more intimidating.<sup>47</sup>

The audience attending a professional masterclass may be in attendance to see the master at work; see her teaching style and technique, and to see her perform live. The audience, therefore, may be less interested in the success or failure of the student.

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<sup>45</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 165.

<sup>46</sup> In my experience and perhaps ideally, an audience made up of student colleagues would be more supportive because they all know that one day they too will have to be on the same stage in the same position. I have seen that sometimes this is not the case. Instead, an audience comprised of colleagues can be more critical. They could be comparing the performer with an idealized version of themselves, or with how they think their classmate ought to be able to play. Watching ones classmate may invite this type of comparison. I have also seen examples of masterclasses where the audience seems to be interested mostly in learning from the master and uses the student as a tool to do just that.

<sup>47</sup> *Genius within: The inner life of Glen Gould*, directed by Michèle Hozer and Peter Raymont (Toronto International Film Festival, 2009), [imdb.com/title/tt1503774](http://imdb.com/title/tt1503774). Glen Gould on performing in his "hometown" of Toronto.

## **The Disposition of the Master as it relates to the Interaction between Master, Student, and Audience**

The interaction between the master and the student is vital to how the student and the audience learn. The master has the ability to influence the mood of the audience and thus the atmosphere of the class with her disposition.<sup>48</sup> The masterclass is a place where a student works with a master in real-time, keeping herself open to experimental and improvisational learning. Students should be open to the different suggestions a master might make. To help students be open to suggestions, the master must be respectful and sensitive to different learning styles.<sup>49</sup> Masters must respect thoughts from students' previous teachers and results of personal study bringing them together with her thoughts on teaching and performing. In this case, the university setting is ideal. Masters have the luxury of time in getting to know all of the students over the course of many years, and can apply their knowledge of each student appropriately in the masterclass.

A masterclass in a professional setting limits the kind of open interaction between the master and student which is based on a longer-term relationship. In this setting the master and student probably will not have met before and will have to work together despite this. In order to make the most of this learning situation, the student should be aware that the master will teach her something quickly based solely upon her current performance, and cannot know if this is typical of her

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<sup>48</sup> Estelle R. Jorgensen, *The Art of Teaching Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 35-37.

<sup>49</sup> I write about learning styles and how a master can accommodate these styles in chapter 3. Deliberate Practice, 37. Greene's teaching through openings, 36. Freire's Critical Consciousness, 31.

performing abilities. She should come to the masterclass open and ready to learn from anything that the master might suggest, even if it is in contradiction with her own ideas and the ideas of her regular teacher.

### **Masterclass as Community**

University masterclasses often result in a congenial community. Camaraderie helps students find confidence in their artistic abilities, and allows them to take artistic risks while being cognitively aware of the support of their colleagues creating a sense of community. A student who shares in such a class can take that experience with them and try to recreate it in their own class. It is important for students who are isolated in the practice room to be part of a community such as this and, for artists, a masterclass is the perfect setting for this to happen. The feeling of community is achieved through the master showing the student and the audience how to treat colleagues and competitors with respect as friends so that the whole class can come together. When the master shows respect and support for the students, the other students who make up the audience will as well.

One of the goals of music education should be the creation of community because music education happens best in a community.<sup>50</sup> In *Music Education as Community*, Jorgensen writes about community as a place, in time, as a process, and as an end. As a place, it can be physical, psychological as a “virtual space”<sup>51</sup>, and

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<sup>50</sup> Jorgensen, *Music Education as Community*, 71.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 72. Susanne Langer describes a virtual space as a psychologically conceived space with a life apart from the physical environment in which the person is. In Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form*, Chapter 5.

social. A social place provides a sense of rootedness, interconnectedness, feelingfulness, and empowerment.<sup>52</sup>

Knowing one's surroundings intimately, possessing self-assurance and confidence in that knowledge, being rooted in and bounded by this place, having one's place in the community, being intimately interconnected with others empowers one to find one's own voice and so speaking, act to change not only the community, but the world beyond. Maxine Greene suggests that making a space where people can participate in naming their world, mutually dialoguing with others, and imaginatively conjuring up new worlds empowers them to create a community in which they can, paradoxically, experience freedom.<sup>53</sup>

A masterclass should be such a space, where the students and the teacher can define their own world and create within it what they need it to be. It should not be a prescribed form, or list of topics. It should be a place for a group of disjunct private lesson students to form an intimate community where the individuals involved can root themselves, interconnect with others, build an emotional, cognitive, and physical attachment, and become empowered by having been involved in such a community.

In time, this community can provide a sense of history and a sense of progress. It is a means of regulation. Time is the basis for tradition, and it brings an awareness of finitude, the awareness that the same group will not always be around, but that this community was worthwhile and with constant attention and careful preservation will exist long after that group has left.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 74. Rootedness promotes cross-generational traditions, interconnectedness promotes a sense of connection with others, feelingfulness means an attachment to the community that is emotionally, cognitively, and physically experienced, and empowerment from all of these things.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 75; Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom*, Chapter 5.

<sup>54</sup> Jorgensen, *Music Education as Community*, 75-76.

## **Conclusion**

Much of how masters teach in a masterclass setting is based on their own character. In an ideal setting, the master balances the pacing with the content and the audience comments with improvisatory teaching while keeping everyone's interest. Students learn how to prepare in order to conquer their fear. The communication in masterclasses is based on the improvised interpersonal interaction between the master and the student. The audience is sometimes expected to participate further, but generally they are the witnesses to the teaching style of the master and to the performance and learning of the student. Each person involved in masterclasses has multiple roles depending on the setting and the situation. The audience has to be attentive to the art created during the class, and participate in it. The student has to make art with a performance and then learn how her art can be better from the master. The master has to initiate the mood, pacing, and topic of the class while keeping the interest of the audience and teaching the student how to make her art better. Knowing that each person is an important part of the masterclass helps create a sense of community in which the audience, the students and the master are connected in a constructive, inclusive learning environment.



### **Chapter Three: Liberatory Edu-Rhetorical Theory and Practice**

Educational philosophies are a world of hope and looking toward what is possible. They are informed by the successes and failures of the past while constantly searching for better ways of teaching. They are about peeking in all of the philosophical corners for multiple ways of being and of teaching that can reach as many students as possible, while allowing for as many variations in teaching styles as there are personalities of teachers and students.

Teaching cannot be a singular approach. These philosophies are not about expecting everyone to learn the same material in the same way, and leaving behind any outliers. We must both allow for and desire differences in how individuals teach and learn. It is neither desirable nor is it possible to have a generation of students graduate; all knowing and thinking the same things in the same way. Encouraging students to be creative and find their own paths early on will result in a more creative society. We do not want students to all start at A and end at B, or even at Z. If everyone begins at A, then we want students to end up at every letter in the alphabet, some who create their own alphabet and each one to get there by different paths. Now, this is the trouble. How do we teach so many different pathways towards uncommon objectives? This is the worth of educational philosophies and their practical purpose for teachers. What do we do? How do we teach in a classroom (or masterclass) that looks like this?

In this chapter I consider pedagogical philosophies as they relate to masterclasses as well as learning styles and processes. I also consider possibilities

for long term masterclass organization and the place for masterclasses in academia and the greater public sphere.

### **Vision of Bridging Worlds**

My goal is to teach and to teach others teach in a manner that guides students to find their own paths. I want to help students engage in and take responsibility for their own education. Ultimately, what a student takes from each class is up to them. The teacher is merely the guide to help them on their paths. But it is the student who must choose that path. This vision of education can be called liberatory education<sup>55</sup>, feminist pedagogy<sup>56</sup>, or holistic teaching.<sup>57</sup>

The Masterclass setting is an ideal place for a liberatory education. Traditional classes focus on the dissemination of knowledge. Sometimes this is done in a liberatory manner; allowing students to take ownership of the knowledge and to have a context for that knowledge, but often it is not.<sup>58</sup> The Masterclass is an inclusive teaching space where through the use of using interaction, collaboration, discussion, and inclusiveness masters can create a space where everyone can learn. This is a space to re-imagine and re-examine what happens in classrooms.<sup>59</sup> Here, students can actively take a role in their own learning, hold themselves accountable,

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<sup>55</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 35.

<sup>56</sup> Robbin D. Crabtree, David Alan Sapp, and Adela C. Licona, "The Passion and the Praxis of Feminist Pedagogy," in *Feminist Pedagogy: Looking back to move Forward*, ed. Robbin D. Crabtree, David Alan Crabtree, and Adela C. Licona (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 3-6.

<sup>57</sup> Fergus McWilliam, *Blow your Own horn!: Horn heresies* (Oakville, Ontario: mosaic press, 2013), 38.

<sup>58</sup> This is not automatically the fault of the teacher. Teachers need to have the freedom and flexibility to create curriculum and the administrative support to be creative.

<sup>59</sup> Crabtree, Sapp, and Licona, "The Passion and the Praxis of Feminist Pedagogy," 4.

transform thought into action, and learn to question traditional notions of knowledge.<sup>60</sup> They can find validation for their own personal experiences since “any pedagogy must take into account the audience for or with whom it is produced.”<sup>61</sup> Masters can demonstrate sincere concern for their students as individuals and learners to help them make connections between their studies and personal lives in order to guide them through intellectual development. Masterclasses can link classroom-based teaching with opportunities for application in the community and outside world.<sup>62</sup> Teaching in a personal manner towards specific students makes it more applicable for those particular students.

### Critical Consciousness

This vision of a liberatory education through cooperative methods and egalitarian relations is shared in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* with ideas about critical thinking.<sup>63</sup> Students should be engaged in critical thinking exercises. This quest for mutual humanization helps both the students and the master learn and appreciate each other’s humanity, or to develop what Paulo Freire calls “critical consciousness.”<sup>64</sup> Masters can constantly strive to engage both students and

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>61</sup> Pamela L. Caughie, and Richard Pearce, “Resisting ‘the Dominance of the Professor’: Gendered Teaching, Gendered Subjects,” in *Feminist Pedagogy: Looking Back to Move Forward*, ed. Robbin D. Crabtree, David Alan Sapp, and Adela C. Licona (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 37-38.

<sup>62</sup> Crabtree, Sapp, and Licona, “The Passion and The Praxis of Feminist Pedagogy,” 4-5; Ruhleder and Stoltzfus, “The Etiquette of a Masterclass,” 188.

<sup>63</sup> Debbie Storrs, and John Mighelich, “Beyond Essentialisms: Team Teaching Gender and Sexuality,” in *Feminist Pedagogy: Looking Back to Move Forward*, ed. Robbin D. Crabtree, David Alan Sapp, and Adela C. Licona (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 62.

<sup>64</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 35. Freire uses the term *conscientização*.

audience, as problem-posers who asks questions to help the students and audience come to their own ideas.

Forming a relationship with the students is important for each master because the relationship is important to facilitate the free flow of ideas and deeper creativity. Students, finding their own critical consciousness, have more effective practice sessions, analyze their own playing, and eventually become their own teachers, which is the end goal of this kind of study.<sup>65</sup> In terms of masterclasses, masters can guide students, encouraging lively discussions, and dissenting opinions while showing respect, and in this way teach the students to think for themselves.

### **Seven Points to create a Liberatory Classroom**

Clara Golden in, “The Radicalization of a Teacher”, introduces a seven point plan which she says can be implemented in any classroom regardless of the subject matter to help create a liberatory education classroom and for the student to be more engaged and actively conscious of their education.

“I think that what these seven goals amount to is teaching students to take themselves and their education seriously. In Adrienne Rich’s terms, I want to create a climate in which my students can claim their education, and my role in the classroom and my course structure are designed to facilitate that. From all that I have said, the difference between teaching students and teaching subject matter should be clear. I hope that my students will be excited by the subject matter that I present in class and that they will remember some of it. But when they forget the facts, I must admit that I

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<sup>65</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1993). This model of teaching as set forth by Paulo Freire is called a Liberatory Education which is in opposition to the Banking System of education. In the Banking system, knowledge is bestowed upon those who know nothing, by those who consider themselves knowledgeable. The assumption of ignorance placed upon the learner oppresses them, negates the education, and ruins the process of inquiry. Keeping the students ignorant of their critical powers makes them need the teacher and makes them easily dominated. The Liberatory Education is where the teacher helps the students learn how to think and to find their critical consciousness.

don't really care. What I do care deeply about are those seven goals, which I believe are independent of subject matter yet can be taught as part of any subject."<sup>66</sup>

1. "Students need to experience learning and thinking as exciting and challenging and to know that reading and discussing issues and ideas can enrich their lives".<sup>67</sup>

In a masterclass setting, students are exposed to the ideas of others usually through a musical performance. They can discuss these ideas with their peers and experience how others learn, practice, and motivate themselves. This can help enhance their musical ideas and give them a broader context for what they have learned. Hearing about what others know and have done can create a deep enough desire to learn, work, and be diligent.

2. "Students can learn that to write well is both necessary and important. Writing is not an inherent talent. Being a good writer takes work, and the students' time in school is when someone will help them learn how to write. They should take advantage of this opportunity to work on their writing".<sup>68</sup>

Writing is not an obvious topic for a musical masterclass. Even though it is not necessarily a main component to performing music, it is an important part of organizing one's thoughts and expressing one's self. Writing critiques of performances and taking clear organized notes on the masterclass can help the student make a clear, broad picture of all that happens in a masterclass. It can help

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<sup>66</sup> Clara Golden, "The Radicalization of a Teacher," in *The Feminist Teacher Anthology: Pedagogies and Classroom Strategies*, ed. Gail Cohee...[et al.] (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998), 22.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.,21. "This sometimes means choosing to teach about issues that are not necessarily in the mainstream of the discipline. I have found that the theoretical and empirical issues that are of most significance to the experts in the field are not necessarily so to the students."

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.,21.

the student remember details from the masterclass long after the class is over and can help solidify those ideas so that the student might later implement them herself.

3. "Students need to feel comfortable speaking. Provide opportunities for them to speak and express their views to the rest of the class by engaging each other in discussion sessions. This allows students an opportunity to be exposed to new ideas, to express their own opinions, to think through ideas and to build on their knowledge alongside their peers".<sup>69</sup>

It is common for the audience to have the opportunity for a public commentary or discourse in a masterclass. Opportunities such as these can help student learn how to express themselves publically. It can teach them how to organize their speaking so that it is the most useful to their peers, how to defend their points-of-view, and how to respectfully hear the points-of-view of others.

4. "An essential feature of a liberatory education is learning that thinking for yourself is crucial. Think through issues and form and express your own opinions, even when they do not agree with the views of peers or teachers."<sup>70</sup>

Some might think that a masterclass setting is in opposition to a liberatory education. They might think that a masterclass is about learning how to emulate a master. That is only one very small way of teaching. A master might hear how you play something, then ask you to imitate her way of playing, then help you find something within the parameters of what is generally accepted that is still in keeping with your own way of playing. The goal of this exercise is to show the student that her vision for the music is valid, while also showing what has come before. Decide who you are and be that person, but with the full knowledge of what has come before, and with what your contemporaries are doing.

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 21-22.

5. "Students should learn that discipline is important. Procrastination is a common problem, but learning how to discipline oneself is one skill that will continue to have relevance."<sup>71</sup>

I find discipline easier when there are deadlines and consequences. Students can learn discipline by being required to perform in masterclasses regularly to help them develop a rhythm for performance. The deadline is the date of the performance and the consequence is having to perform no matter one's preparedness level. There can be a grade incentive attached to it, but I suspect for most that is not necessary. When there is another kind of deadline for performing such as a recital or an audition, the student will be accustomed to how they must prepare. They will know how long and how much effort it takes for them to go from being able to get through a piece to being able to perform it convincingly, and then how much longer and with what level of concentration they will need to be able to play convincing when under any sort of pressure.

6. "Students need to examine their own lives and give serious thought to how they have lived and how they would like to live."<sup>72</sup>

A musical masterclass can put the life habits of others on display. It can highlight practice habits, but also focus on how people deal with stress that comes with performing and with just living. The master can help with this by choosing topics that help student think about the manner in which they would like to live, and how to get there.

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 22. "Further, I would like them to consider the ways in which their own lives connect with or impinge on those of others on this earth. Toward this end, I present material that will facilitate their thinking about such issues."

7. "Be more socially responsible and concerned as a result of having participated in this class."<sup>73</sup>

Use a masterclass to create a community and to teach students that their choices are not only theirs, but effect their surroundings and the people in those surroundings.

### **Teaching through Openings**

Maxine Greene<sup>74</sup> introduces the idea of a conscious, liberatory education starting from areas of knowledge and interest for each student and expanding those interests to other areas in order to help students take ownership of learning and use their imaginations toward education.

Masters can teach in a way that helps students explore their imaginations and use their imaginations to understand other cultures, empathize with unfamiliar situations in life, find their courage, and expand and deepen their interest and understanding in music and through this, their understanding of other subjects. The master creates situations in which the students begin to ask why "in all the tones of voice there are."<sup>75</sup> This can be done through empathy and by teaching through openings. This is a concept developed by Greene that begins with the teacher finding small areas of each student's interest and expanding the interest of the student to other related and eventually non-related areas. Eventually the students will be able

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 22. "I want them to understand the importance of learning about other people, about other cultures, and about what is going on in the world. I hope to help them develop a sense of social responsibility and to see ways that they can express that sense. I want them to know and to feel that they can make a difference in whatever way seems right for them. To foster such commitment, I integrate material about persons who have resisted oppression and have been engaged in social change movements."

<sup>74</sup> Maxine Greene, *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change* (San Francisco, 1995).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 6.



to do this for themselves and be able to find their own spaces through which they can find new interests. This way of teaching is a way to open public spaces in which students, speaking in their own voices and acting on their own initiatives can identify and choose for themselves in relation to such principles as freedom, justice, equality, and concern for others.<sup>76</sup>

Masters can use something akin to Greene's concept of teaching through openings to create a progressive masterclass environment. Using this concept can be as simple as encouraging a student who is learning an obscure work to perform it in a masterclass which can get other students interested in that work in particular, but it can also open a dialogue about how to find new music and less well-known old music. This is a way to expand the standard repertoire within a class and could also be a way to get the students to try improvising or composing cadenzas. Teaching through openings is a way to slowly expand areas of interest. This can apply not only to styles of music and other areas surrounding music, but even to interdisciplinary interests.

### **Deliberate Practice**

Deliberate practice requires a high level of consciousness from the students. It empowers them to immerse themselves in the music and make conscious decisions about the course of their education. They can reexamine and reimagine customary performance practices in order to make their own decisions about the path of the music. This a learning philosophy focused on how students achieve new

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<sup>76</sup> Greene, *Releasing the Imagination*, 68.

levels of performance; when they are fully engaged mentally and are working toward the goal of overcoming current boundaries.<sup>77</sup>

Masters can help students direct their practice towards what is the most optimized use of their practice time.<sup>78</sup> This kind of practice is necessary to attain the level of expert. Deliberate practice is an investment of time with structured activities that help students improve performance.<sup>79</sup> This invested effort can be seen in four stages of practice beginning with an unknown work. Stage one is getting the big picture which can include reading through the piece, analysis, and listening to recordings. Stage two is technical practice. Usually this begins with small sections which are increased in length as they are learned. The motor skills involved in performing these sections begin to become automatic and the piece is being memorized. “Enhancing the quality of practice requires substantial effort.”<sup>80</sup> Stage three is practicing performance. This includes playing through the entire work, fixing memory slips, and working up to a proper tempo. Imaging an audience or performing in front of an informal audience can help students make the performance practice more realistic. They might even try performing in different locations, and in performing attire. The fourth stage is maintaining the piece before the real performance, or between performances if it is to be performed more than

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83. <sup>77</sup> Amirault, and Branson, “Educators and Expertise: A Brief History and Theories and Models,”

<sup>78</sup> Lehmann and Gruber, “Music,” 460.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 458- 459.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 460.

once.<sup>81</sup> The actual performance quite often is actually more enjoyable than the preparatory effort.

### **Instruction, Practice, Example, and Reflection**

V.A. Howard<sup>82</sup> writes about creating a liberatory education from the specific point of view of a music educator. He writes about how all aspects of practice is a conscious choice which can lead to critical consciousness.

The way that we learn and teach music is through instruction, practice, example, and reflection, emphasizing imagination and expression. Through choosing to learn at high levels students learn perseverance, confidence, hope, and trust.<sup>83</sup> Instruction encompasses passing information through verbal, nonverbal, and demonstrative procedures. Following instructions is a conscious, intentional choice based on trust that the information is sound, and the results will be as predicted. Students must have confidence and trust in the instructions, and then choose to act on those instructions. Without the decision to act, all of the instruction is meaningless.<sup>84</sup> Practice is not just drill or a set of controlled circumstances. Practice should be a combination of drill, critical thinking, and mental rehearsal. Mental imaging keeps the practice out of the realm of drudgery, keeps the performance inspired, and helps the musical performance by attaching an image to different

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 460-461. These four stages of practice are based on the case study about solitary practice. Chaffin, Imreh and Crawford followed individual performers practicing a new piece for performance and obtained retrospective and concurrent reports. Chaffin, R., Imreh, G., & Crawford, M. *Practicing perfection: Memory and piano performance*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2002.

<sup>82</sup> V.A Howard, *Learning by All Means: Lessons from the Arts* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992).

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 72.

technical aspects.<sup>85</sup> Examples can be formal or non-formal, verbal or nonverbal, understood or misunderstood, good or bad, intentional or non-intentional. Examples can be imitated, but should never only be imitated because this puts the burden of learning solely on the learner who without help in perceiving mistakes might be prematurely satisfied with only minor accomplishments.<sup>86</sup> Imitation and example should be used as a component of drill and practice so that they can help the student gain a perspective of the larger task. In the proper context and with proper guidance, imitation can “invite extrapolation to the unknown.”<sup>87</sup> Learning by reflection can be a simple rethinking or reconsideration of a former action or thought, or an individualizing characteristic of one’s work.<sup>88</sup> The ability to reflect on past procedures and bring together all that is learned from teachers and life experiences through instruction, practice, and example while keeping imagination and expression prevalent is training the sensibilities. Training the sensibilities is the most important part of education, and can only be done through the arts.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 44, 99.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 136: “Plato meant what he said: that an aesthetic education is the only education that brings grace to the body and nobility to the mind, and that we must make art the basis of education because it can operate in childhood, during the sleep of reason; and when reason does come, art will have prepared a path for her, and she will be greeted as a friend whose essential lineaments have for long been familiar. Moreover, Plato did not see or offer any alternative to art as an instrument of early education- it is the only instrument that can penetrate into the recesses of the soul. Plato’s teaching on this matter was taken up in the modern world by Schiller, and in all his philosophical works, but above all in his *Letters upon the Aesthetical Education of Man* [sic], we have again a clear and explicit statement of this doctrine of education: that until man, in his physical and sensuous modes of being, has been accustomed to the laws of beauty, he is not capable of spiritual liberty. Many other witnesses to this truth might be called but none so unequivocal as these two, whom I value more than any others; and I am very content to rest in their company.”

The master should know how to incorporate instruction, practice, example, and reflection into her improvised masterclass teaching. When the master instructs the student to play something in a different way, the student makes a conscious choice to trust the master and to try the instruction. When the master improvises an exercise for the students to help them fix the performance, this is a form of practice. This could be by drilling a small section a few times or through mental rehearsal. Then, the teacher and the student analyze the effectiveness of the exercise to decide if it worked. If not, something else is needed, and the master should come up with a different exercise for the student. Inventing many different ways to think about a section of a work helps keep practice interesting. The master also gives examples using the performed piece. The examples can be verbal, and the master might talk about the good things that the student did. The master can use her instrument and perform an example while having the student analyze the master's performance and reflect upon how the student and master performances were different and similar. This exercise can help the student begin to know how to analyze their own practice room performances, which will help her make efficient decisions about what needs to be accomplished without being prematurely satisfied.

### **Improvised and Instinctive Teaching**

The principles of improvised and instinctive teaching allow teachers freedom to consider the students and to speak to their specific needs. "Any Pedagogy must

take into account the audience for or with whom it is produced.”<sup>90</sup> This style does not conform to rigid criteria about what and how to teach, but allows for a fluid model which reflects both the teacher and the students.

Improvised teaching allows problems to be overcome within the masterclass. The master must rely on teaching and performing experience to find ways to help the student immediately during a masterclass. This includes technical issues that arise during performance, or specific aspects such as articulation, lip trills, and approaches to practice. The master might help the student with phrasing issues, the student’s concept of the piece, or with the execution of the performance. If the performance goes poorly, there is the possibility that the student cannot make it through the piece, and the master will have to deal with this accordingly, with compassion.

A master may use a variety of techniques in teaching. She can demonstrate with her own performance, or by singing how it should sound. She can help the student hear a phrase differently by explaining and demonstrating it, then having the student emulate the performance.<sup>91</sup> If the student is performing excerpts, there is a range of acceptable parameters for each excerpt. Using this kind of emulation can help students bring their excerpt performance within acceptable limits according to a judging committee while retaining the student’s personal identity. When the student encounters technical problems, the master might invent an exercise which addresses the student’s specific area of difficulty. It might not be

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<sup>90</sup> Caughie and Pearce, “Resisting ‘the Dominance of the Professor’: Gendered Teaching, Gendered Subjects,” 37-38.

<sup>91</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 176-178.

effective at all, in which case the master might invent another exercise or at least change the original one to better fit the student; this is the essence of improvisational teaching. If the student is having psychological trouble performing, the master might help the student work through these performance anxiety issues. Working empirically, the teacher needs to analyze the student performance, find what was good and what needs improvement, and then figure out how to help the student keep the best parts of her work while enhancing what was previously lacking. The master experiments to find what will work for each student. She performs all of this analysis, experimentation, implementation, re-analysis, re-experimentation, and re-implementation without time to sit and think about how it might be better taught. She has to do all of this while keeping a multitude of onlookers entertained and the well-being of a student in the front of her mind.<sup>92</sup>

Masters need to find individual ways of teaching.<sup>93</sup> They should find colleagues who are open to new ideas and new ways of doing to create a support network for themselves. This mode of teaching cannot be standardized or implemented on a large scale because it is largely instinctive; each teacher needs to judge whether specific methods are appropriate and effective or not.<sup>94</sup> Learning about the existing models and philosophies of teaching helps teachers think about how they want to do things differently and similarly to the philosophers that they

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<sup>92</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 175-176.

<sup>93</sup> Estelle R. Jorgensen, *Transforming Music Education* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 11-12, 119.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-131.

have examined.<sup>95</sup> A master will not know with what she is comfortable when she begins teaching; she will have to try many different approaches in order to find her own style. After a while, she will start to know what works for her and what does not. The ideas that do work may not come from V.A. Howard or Maxine Greene, they might be something entirely new based on the master's own experience. Some masters might end up with something quite different than a "standard" masterclass.

## Eloquence

Pedagogical eloquence is the rhetorical basis of the art of human education.<sup>96</sup> We should teach with eloquence of speech and include the whole of a subject, presenting differing perspectives regardless of our personal beliefs. In "The Art of Humane Education" Verene writes about the virtues of eloquence and how the best way for a teacher to convey her ideas and to help the students find their own ideas is through pedagogical eloquence:

Eloquence refers not to fine phraseology but to the speech that captures the whole of a subject."<sup>97</sup> "Eloquence, the speech of the whole, like poetic speech must delight, instruct, and move. It must delight in the sense that it is more important that a proposition be interesting than that it be true. Truth, of course, adds interest. The speech of a teacher must attract interest in order to say the true things that instruct. Finally, it must move. It must affect the passions and thus change the person in some way so that the truth of the instruction is taken up in the self. If this is not accomplished then no education has occurred. Education depends upon the metamorphosis of the self toward wisdom. At least, this is the character of humane education, if not all education. The purpose of teaching is to produce a self that can think. Information and skills will fall into line behind this. I share your view that too

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<sup>95</sup> Estelle R. Jorgensen, *The Art of Teaching Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 4-6.

<sup>96</sup> Donald Phillip Verene, *The Art of Humane Education* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), xii.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.



much emphasis is placed today on information, which in itself is not thought.<sup>98</sup>

Masterclasses often place less importance on speaking than on other tools of teaching. More consideration should be given to eloquence because through pedagogical eloquence the students become conscious of the idea as a whole, the implications of the idea, and its future application.<sup>99</sup> Eloquence can be used in masterclasses to present arguments and dare students to achieve more.<sup>100</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Teaching through instruction, practice, example, and reflection should be incorporated into masterclasses. Teaching through openings can be an excellent way to incorporate new areas of learning to the masterclass students and audience as well as a way to encourage a tolerant, healthy masterclass environment. Masters need to help students think for themselves. The students need to be engaged in critical thinking to deepen their capacity for creativity. Masters can find their own ways of teaching that best fit their personal style, but it is helpful to know about other ways of teaching to better inform their decisions about teaching. Speaking with eloquence, especially when the speech is improvised, is extremely difficult, but masters should strive for this. It makes them understood more easily, and it helps them present their arguments and persuade the audience. A master should keep these ideas about teaching and speaking in mind when preparing a masterclass. Learning about different teaching philosophies helps a master know how to begin,

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 12-14.

but then she needs to come up with her own way of teaching. A good way to start finding one's own way is to know what others have done and what others have thought about doing. This is one way that masters can learn from the experience of others. Educational theorists have thought of many possible scenarios for teaching. It is up to each master to know what possibilities exist and to decide on a course of action based on these possibilities.

## Chapter Four: Critique of Observed Masterclasses

This chapter discusses the character traits of masters, how masters embody these traits while handling their many roles and how they apply teaching methods and eloquence. These masterclass scenarios highlight some situations masters encounter, and how individual masters resolve these situations.<sup>101</sup> Many experienced masters, who are excellent improvisational teachers, still fall short in their masterclass organization, presentation, and conception. I show vignettes of horn masterclasses highlighting ways in which each master excels and falls short.

### **Scenario #1: Teaching the whole room through acknowledgement of the audience**

Some masters handle the audience-student dynamic well. They balance speaking to the audience with teaching a student. They are able to teach everyone in the room while addressing specific topics with the student. Others have difficulty with this and end up teaching a private lesson in a public setting.

Daphne came to her masterclass with some things she had prepared to say. She began by talking to the whole class, the audience, and the students. She was a guest master in a regular university masterclass, so she let us know who she was and what was important to her. She spoke about her concept of the horn as being 12 natural horns hooked together, and how we need to be more involved with how

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<sup>101</sup> These are actual masterclasses that I observed as an audience member. Although my observations included piano, voice, trumpet, violin, cello, timpani, and conducting classes, I chose to portray only horn masterclasses here so that I am comparing analogous classes. In order to protect the identity of those whom I critique I will address them with fictional, feminine names.

each valve combination is like a different natural horn. She talked briefly to us about using the harmonic series, and doing interval practice and scales in a warm-up to attune ourselves to the natural aspects of the horn. The opening part of this masterclass was an extemporaneous speech given to acquaint us with each other. Daphne was being very personable, and it felt as if we were all having a conversation with her. She spoke loudly so that everyone could easily hear her and stood in the center of the stage so that we could easily see her. She had an authoritative presence on stage that helped everyone focus and listen.

The first student came up to perform, and Daphne let him play all of the way through the Franz Strauss “Nocturno”. With the student she worked on technical things that helped the music such as making the slurs more *portamento* and showing all of the harmonics of a slur rather than sitting on the bottom note until it is time to be at the top note. During this work she was talking to everyone, both the student and the audience. Then, she invented an exercise to be played only on the mouthpiece to help the student feel how to do this.

Between the student performers, she gave an impromptu speech about more ways to practice the work we had all just heard. She asked for opinions from the audience regarding tempo but did not let the class get out of her control. She ended her class by performing for us.

In contrast, Renae began her masterclass by walking directly to the two chairs and the stand on the stage without looking at or speaking to anyone. She did not introduce herself to us at all, but rather began the private lesson straight away. The first student performer played the second and third movements of W.A.

Mozart's *Fourth Horn Concerto K. 495* for us. Renae had a lot of good performance advice such as how to achieve a musical line by playing more deliberately, making the 16<sup>th</sup> notes slower, and having more articulation so that the music speaks to the audience instead of just the performer. During this time she did a lot of demonstrating on her instrument. Her sound was exquisite as was her sense of musical style. Her demonstrations made clear what she was looking for from the student, which was good because her speaking was very unclear. Renae, at this point, had still not acknowledged the audience, and she did not until the student looked at us to ask if we heard the same thing. Then she mumbled something that I could not quite comprehend. This was a common theme for her, she did a lot of mumbling and talked into the stand so she was very hard to understand.<sup>102</sup>

The next performer had excerpts to play for Renae. He started with an excerpt from the end of *Ein Heldenleben*. It has a big slur up to a high note, and he missed the high note and the notes after it. At first, Renae thought it was a problem with breathing. She said: "I really try to avoid running out of air. Sometimes you have to breathe before a high note, but stay relaxed and don't think of it as a treacherous place to breathe."<sup>103</sup> They tried this a few times, and it really didn't help. They tried accenting the notes leading up to it with the idea that it would come screaming out. It didn't help. They had a discussion about pressure and how using too little pressure will make too much stress on the embouchure. They also talked

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<sup>102</sup> Renae was not very verbally articulate, and demonstrated each point by playing her instrument.

<sup>103</sup> This is a quotation taken from my notes as I wrote it while observing this masterclass.

about making the tongue shape into an “e” to help with the high range.<sup>104</sup> When this didn’t help they finally went on to a different excerpt. Audience members around me begin to have little whispered side conversations.

They briefly went on to Brahms’ *Symphony #1* and worked on air support and did some breathing analysis and exercises. Then, they went back to *Ein Heldenleben!* Working to get the high notes, they tried long tones, and tried going up chromatically. Then, they just started pounding away at the high Bb.<sup>105</sup> The student finally did get the high note, and then they talked about fighting mental blocks and how you have to just take control of them.<sup>106</sup> This could have been a good place to stop, but instead they went on to *Don Juan*. Renae discovered that the young man was tired from pounding away at *Ein Heldenleben*, so they did embouchure work. The second time Renae acknowledged the audience was at the end when she asked if we had any questions.<sup>107</sup>

Renae experimented with students to try to figure out what worked best for each individual. She was a good improvisational teacher.<sup>108</sup> With the first student she helped the student make music and find the phrases to create something special out of each line of music. With the second student she became fixated on a few high notes that the student was struggling with that day. Instead of moving on to other excerpts, she was so concerned about the student missing the high notes that she

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<sup>104</sup> The student was either exhausted, or just out of shape.

<sup>105</sup> Other audience members actually commented to me that there had to be a better way to go about this, and that the master should stop and try a new approach.

<sup>106</sup> The speech was less effective because of the playing struggle that the audience had all endured before the speech.

<sup>107</sup> There were a few questions, and Renae was polite and tried to be thorough.

<sup>108</sup> The manner in which Renae taught the first student would have made a good private lesson.

could not give the student ways to work on it in the practice room and let it go. This is one of the possible places for a good teacher to turn into a not-so-good masterclass teacher. She could not let it go to let the student work it out over time.

Renae was a good private lesson teacher. The problem was that there was an audience, and that this was not a private lesson. Not acknowledging the audience does not make them go away, and it made the class uncomfortable.<sup>109</sup> Renae needed to leave the area of safety that she had created behind the music stand, to face the audience and speak to them. She was not willing to take the risk, letting her personal style and fear get in the way of her teaching effectiveness. She failed to recognize all of the factors competing for her attention, and consequently the class suffered.

While Renae ignored the class, Daphne involved us in nearly every way while maintaining control. Renae played everything to help the student know what she was saying, and Daphne really did not play anything until the end of the class. Her words were clear enough without musical demonstration. It does not matter what combination of demonstration and explanation the master uses, but it is important that they communicate with everyone in the room.

Like Renae, Daphne was an excellent private lesson teacher. She listened to each student, analyzed their performance, and was able to make quick judgments about things that the students needed to address to make better performances. She worked with the students until they understood what they should be feeling and how specific things should sound. The main difference between them was that in Renae's class, there was not any audience interaction, thus no relationship

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<sup>109</sup> It was obvious to me that Renae was uncomfortable speaking to the audience.

established between her and the audience. If the master does not have the attention of the audience, she loses rhetorical authority. If she would have established a relationship with the audience she might have noticed, through the audience that her pacing was off, particularly with the second student. Daphne addressed the audience and taught everyone in a fast-paced, efficient manner that did not give anyone time to get distracted. She made sure that the student understood what to do, but also made sure that everyone understood why. It was a much more engaging class during which everyone learned a great deal from her.

### **Scenario #2: The Agenda Masterclass**

Some masters have limitations of bias and functional fixedness. These masters see problems which they have studied extensively in every performance.<sup>110</sup> This is not done intentionally. It is the result of extensive knowledge in a specific area and can be avoided if the master is aware of it. Masterclasses still need to be a flexible space for improvisational teaching based on student performance, where real teaching and real learning takes place, where an audience can witness this and interact with something genuine. The master should try to cultivate critical thinking through interactive teaching where the master listens to each student individually to determine their needs in the moment.

Adria was so connected with what the student needed that she conducted her masterclass like a coaching session. She conducted and sang with them while they played and demonstrated different possibilities of how some excerpts might be

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<sup>110</sup> Chi, "Two Approaches to the Study of Experts' Characteristics," 26-27.



played. One of the students was having trouble with the trills in Mozart. Adria took that opportunity to speak to the whole audience about how to trill, about the different ways to trill, and how these different trills are appropriate in different styles of music. Then she transitioned back into which trill was appropriate in Mozart and had the student try it, explaining how to practice this once the student was back in the practice room. She did all of this while talking to the room as a whole. She addressed the audience as if it were each audience member's private lesson, and she talked to each person individually while addressing the concerns of the performing student.

The agenda masterclass is the opposite of Adria's class. In the agenda masterclass, the master is focused on the audience and already has prepared what she will say regardless of what the student plays. She is skipping the student component of the teaching process.

Camille gave a masterclass where she wanted to tell about her thoughts on practicing and perfecting these specific excerpts. I know this because she stated her purpose at the beginning of the class. She had deconstructed the excerpts, practiced the parts and put them back together, and was ready to talk about them. While the student came on stage and was getting set up, Camille told the story of how Richard Strauss conceived of *Till Eulenspiegel*, and how the opening ought to reflect the character of the first timid, then increasingly bolder prankster *Till Eulenspiegel*. The student plays the opening of *Till*. His rhythm at the beginning was perfect, and the last three notes were centered, round, and in time. The second phrase was precisely in time with the end of the first phrase. It was an excellent performance. This

performance was bad luck for Camille. It is very unlikely that a student will perform *Till* this well on his first attempt. Rather than adapting to what actually happened, Camille proceeded with what she had planned to say, having the student work on the ending C-G-C. Camille asks him to slide from one note to the next so it is now C~ G ~ C~. He did, and then played it normally again and it sounded the same as the first time.<sup>111</sup> Then, they worked on the rhythm. Commendably, Camille said that this student didn't need help with the rhythm, but if he did, this is how he should work on it. Start by playing everything as if it were an eighth note. Then, put in the accents on the correct eighth note. Last, they worked on phrasing over the top A. It is the highest note, but it is not the goal of a phrase. One should wait to crescendo into the low notes until after the top A. They worked on this a few times, and then the student played the whole excerpt again. It sounded the same as the first time he played it.

A masterclass setting needs to have improvised teaching because the master cannot know what is going to happen in the student performances. If a master follows a prepared script even if the class does not fit that script, the student will not learn from this, and the audience will notice that the master did not teach things that the student needed. The audience may have learned something from this demonstration even if the student did not. If they did not know how to practice *Till* previously, they learned strategies from the demonstration. Some of the audience members might have thought that they had seen those same problems when

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<sup>111</sup> I recorded this masterclass and played this part many times over in an attempt to detect any significant change. I could not.

teaching, or that they have those problems when they play that excerpt. If this situation arises the master should vary the prepared list and talk about what the student needs. This is better teaching and will be more genuine for both the student and the audience.

Camille had an agenda which limited her scope of interaction. She did not teach in an improvised manner coming up with solutions and help for the student after analysis of his performance. She did not interact with the student. Rather than basing her teaching on the student performance, she already had what she would teach prepared. She could have varied her script to fit this situation, but she did not. In contrast, Adria listened intently to the students, and imagined ways to help them, giving students immediate application of new thoughts.

### **Scenario #3: The Panel of Experts**

Some masters avoid some of the difficulties discussed previously by creating their own format. They invite their own students to the stage to demonstrate things that they would like discuss. In this scenario, the audience becomes the students, the students on stage are now a panel of experts, and the master is the discussion leader and moderator.

Sarah demonstrated her personal, daily practice routine which included a warm-up and elements for daily maintenance and strength building. She brought her own students to the stage and used them as experts to demonstrate specific, demanding portions of the routine. They were also used as a witness panel to talk about how each of them do the routine a little differently, suggesting that this is a

routine that each can tailor to their own daily needs. Sarah kept the audience interested by speaking directly to them and allowing questions during the demonstrations. Everyone was expected to have their instruments and participate. Sarah demonstrated each aspect of the routine, and the audience mimicked her to find out for themselves how these exercises felt.

Sarah successfully turned the audience into the students and turned her students who were helping with the demonstrations into a panel of experts. Masters should be careful navigating this setting, making sure that the panel does not overwhelm the audience and that someone is clearly in charge. Sarah did this very well. She was always clearly in control. She did the initial demonstrations herself and talked about how each exercise should feel once the series was complete. Her experts did not talk unless she addressed them, asking them to demonstrate or speak. When audience members had questions, she repeated them so everyone could hear and then answered the question or directed one of her expert panel to answer.

Kaylee also demonstrated her practice routine in a masterclass setting, but she did not have a panel of masters to help her. Instead, she demonstrated the exercise and the audience mimicked the exercise back to her. The audience members were the students here as well, but she only offered her own opinion on the exercises. In contrast Sarah made sure that the audience/students knew that they could tailor the routine to their needs using the perspective of the panel of masters as testimonial evidence. Kaylee offered little instruction or explanation. She

was interested in getting through the whole routine rather than taking bits of it that highlight what to do and then explaining what it is supposed to accomplish.

Kaylee was soft spoken relying on her playing to communicate for her. She never achieved the rapt attention that Sarah enjoyed from the audience because she was less amiable, less organized, and less open about herself with the audience. She was never able to establish a rapport with the audience. The audience did not ask any questions because she had not gained their complete attention. She was unable to make the audience interested in the daily-routine process.

Sarah was comfortable in front of the audience; she commanded a large group even when she was asking them to make a lot of noise. She moved seamlessly between her views and the opinions of her experts. She used their presence and experience to validate and authenticate what she said about her routine. She established a cordial relationship with the audience through her personal style which was kind, but efficient. She shared some of her personal history with them, telling them how she came to know this routine and how she changed it over the years to suit her own needs. This established her as the definitive master and her personable casual style established the mood of the class. She managed her class expertly, keeping it moving so that there were not stagnant moments.

#### **Scenario #4: A Defensive Masterclass**

A masterclass is not a good place to defend against a tide of public opinion. Hannah took half of the masterclass time<sup>112</sup> to defend her point of view. She did so

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<sup>112</sup> The defense of her view took around 45 minutes

by giving a history of how she came to believe in her philosophies on performing and auditioning. She ended by saying that each performer must decide if they can immerse themselves in a life of constant practice, because in order to succeed they must, but most will fail. The point of her lecture was unclear,<sup>113</sup> and it dragged on. The students had to re-warm-up, then perform with this rather negative speech about considering quitting still hanging in the air. If the speech was necessary, it could have been better received if she had put it at the end of the masterclass. If it had been at the end, then the students could have performed their best, and the masterclass would have had a different tone. She used it as an introductory speech to tell the audience about herself and how her different life experiences helped her arrive at her current philosophies, but it was neither well-prepared nor articulated. She did not have a clear purpose and needed to be better organized to make her thoughts flow. As it was, the speech was long and rambling about how things used to be, and about how different they are now. This speech ruined the flow and feeling of goodwill of the masterclass. She created more fear for the students who were about to play by actively saying how difficult it is to succeed, and made it even more difficult for them to get up and perform.

Grace was a guest master in a symposium setting. She was supposed to teach two contest winners. She was attentive to the first student, but neglected the audience by not addressing us at all.<sup>114</sup> Her back was often facing us, and she said things to the student that were inaudible to me. With the first student she worked

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<sup>113</sup> It seemed like she was telling everyone who ever missed notes to quit now because it is not worth it.

<sup>114</sup> Like Renae.

on the music and breathing. She played the accompaniment part on her horn, and sang phrases for the student to emulate. When talking about breathing, she pointed to the student's music and said: "Breathe here, here, not here, and here."<sup>115</sup> Even though I could not hear Grace's comments, I could hear that the first student played very well.

The second student played the same piece as the first, but was extremely nervous. The second student began playing, and had not completed the first phrase when Grace stopped him to work on instrument position and sound quality by practicing air attacks. They started the piece again with the student's corrected instrument position. Grace let him get through just a few phrases and then stopped him again. This is the first time that Grace addressed the audience.<sup>116</sup> She stepped out from behind the stand where she stood with the student and spoke directly to the audience. She said that this is one of the most difficult pieces in our repertoire, and that not everyone should play it. The student was visibly crushed.<sup>117</sup> Grace continued with her speech, having not looked at the student yet, saying that there is no shame in not playing the hardest pieces. It is better to play pieces that you can play very well rather than pieces that are very hard. She told this student that there is nothing with which she can help him and that he should give up.

Before Grace made her speech, she was an oppressive teacher. With the first student she asked the student to emulate her style. This was not for the purpose of teaching the student about different ways of playing, but to get the student to play

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<sup>115</sup> This quotation is documented in my notes taken on the masterclass while attending it.

<sup>116</sup> I wrote in my notes that the time was 9:50am, and the masterclass began at 9am.

<sup>117</sup> The student's shoulders visibly drooped. He looked as though he was about to cry.

exactly in the manner of the master.<sup>118</sup> She neither engaged the students in critical thinking, nor helped them explore ways of playing. She imposed her perspective on the students and demanded compliance.<sup>119</sup> When Grace made her impromptu speech to the audience about the second student, she violated the trust that she was asking the student to give.

Hannah and Grace both told the students to give up. I cannot think of an instance where it is a good idea to tell students to give up, especially not in a very general way like Hannah did addressing the whole room, and not in front of an entire audience like Grace. If, at any point, it is necessary to tell someone to give up, or try a piece after they have practiced more, the teacher should have compassion for the student and speak to him privately, not on a masterclass stage.

Grace was quite articulate in her impromptu speech. The speech was highlighted within the masterclass format by the change in her address. While the rest of the class was in private lesson-style, the master stepped out of that style to address the audience with her impromptu speech. I am in favor of this style of teaching where the master addresses the audience with an impromptu speech about something that stemmed from the student performance, just not this particular topic.

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<sup>118</sup> Grace is the type of teacher Paulo Freire warns about when writing about the “Banking System” of education.

<sup>119</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.



### **Scenario #5: The Section Masterclass**

At large conventions orchestra sections perform and teach throughout the conference. Sometimes they give masterclasses as a section to demonstrate and coach excerpts and give chamber performances.

Ann's section gave a masterclass with a university horn section who won a competition for the opportunity to play. The university section prepared several excerpts. The format at this masterclass was for the university section to perform an excerpt, the master section commented on that excerpt; then the university section played the entire excerpt again supposedly after having learned something from the master section. This was very inefficient. The comments led by the principal were very informal, perhaps too informal. The other section members said very little, and it seemed like it was hard for Ann's section to have a unified point, making it difficult for the students to implement any of the ideas that were tossed at them. The master section did not have their instruments on stage and did all of their teaching verbally. They were not comfortable making comments as a group, and did not know how to address the university section. Ann's section wasted a lot of time conferring with each other about what to address, and then their points were either too small or not specific enough, when a coaching session could have been more effective.

Margaret's section encountered a similar setting, but handled it differently. They knew which excerpts the students were going to play in advance, so prior to the student performance, her section talked about the excerpts and demonstrated playing them as a section. One aim of this masterclass was to watch a professional section at work. When the student section played their version, they played through

the whole excerpt as a section, then, the master section commented in the following manner. Margaret, the principal, was the moderator between the two sections and the audience, but, in this scenario, each member of Margaret's section spoke directly to the student who played the same part that she did, not necessarily about that part. The master horn 2 asked the students who is and who should be leading during one of the excerpts, and the master horn 3 suggested that the students need to play softer to make room for the crescendo. Each offered some general comments as well as specific ones for their part. The masterclass was very direct and well managed. There was not confusion like there was with Ann's section. Margaret's section was very organized, and their comments got results. The students played each excerpt several times not always in complete form, but the subsequent times were all better. When there was still some correcting to do after time for that excerpt had passed, Margaret's section offered additional thoughts to help the students work through them later.

The main difference between these two section masterclasses was how the principal player kept the masterclass organized and how she involved the rest of the section. Ann did not use the master section well to work with the student section. She made comments to everyone in general and then asked her section if there was anything that anyone else wanted to say; a few made inaudible comments. None of them addressed a specific part, nor did they ask the students to think and decide who was leading the section at different points of the music. Her master section gave the impression of being unprepared and not very interested in the student section. They did not make the students think, did not demonstrate anything for

them, and they did not help the students put the excerpts into context to fit with a larger concept of the piece.

Margaret's section taught in a different manner. They were organized and gave concise comments. They had the students play little bits of the excerpts giving the students immediate application of the material to make sure that the instructions were understood. They taught by instruction, practice, example, and reflection by giving the students verbal instructions, having the students play small chunks of the excerpts to practice, demonstrating the excerpts that the students were going to play, and asking the students to evaluate some of their own performance. Margaret's section asked the students to reflect on their own performance by asking them if they thought they played a good *rallentando*, keeping everyone together and following whom they should, and by asking the students if they liked what they had just played better than their earlier performance.

The masterclass of Margaret's section reflected her disposition. Margaret engaged the students and addressed the audience directly. She set the example of how to be both professional and accessible for the rest of her section. She directed each of her section members to address the corresponding student section member. This was very helpful for the students. Each section member spoke about something different that they often notice when performing in their own section. They talked about who they listen to in different excerpts and when to bring out their own part more, when they must listen for the principal, and how to judge volume based on who needs to be heard. They spoke to the students from their own experience,

connecting with the person playing the corresponding part, finding a way to make the environment much more interactive and supportive.

### **Scenario #6: Ideal Masterclasses**

Jacquelyn gave a masterclass that we can model. She began class with a performance of her own which inspired the whole audience and infected us with excitement about what was to come. With the first student she let the student perform the complete movement before giving any critique. When she gave the critique, she stood behind the student and off to the side, so that the student could see her also, and spoke to the whole audience. She spoke about technical things that can help make the music, and practical things that help the performer such as: "Get to the mouthpiece early enough to set your embouchure. Decide on what count you are going to breathe, and on what count you will be set at the mouthpiece. Try breathing on 1 and set the embouchure on 3."<sup>120</sup> Then, she had the student try it a few times until the entrance was comfortable for the student. Jacquelyn asked this student questions about phrasing decisions helping the student reflect on the performance and the decisions made prior to the performance. With another student, this master created exercises to help the student overcome difficulties with rhythm and tonguing. Then, Jacquelyn worked this exercise into a phrase. "Always make the phrase if you have to make a choice between that and something else."<sup>121</sup> After she had worked with the student on the invented exercise, she broke off into

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<sup>120</sup> Taken from a quotation written in my personal notes at the time of observing the masterclass with Jacquelyn.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

an impromptu speech about how she practices, breaking the music down into smaller chunks and repeating it until it is comfortable. With another student, Jacquelyn worked on how to collaborate with a pianist. In this she addressed the hornist, not the pianist. She told the student that she needed to know where the phrases begin and end, even if the phrases pass between the piano and the other instrument in the middle of the phrase. Know if you are picking up the phrase in the middle, or if you are handing it off, and play it accordingly.

Jacquelyn expertly commanded both the students and the audience. She spoke about herself enough to give the class insight and taught using musical examples and verbal instruction. She prodded the students to critique their own performances, reflect upon them, and to make their own decisions based on that. My criticism of the class is that she did not manage the time. This class had six students perform. Jacquelyn let the time get away while she was teaching resulting in each student performance being too long, meaning that the entire class was very long.

Emma gave an ideal masterclass. She began her masterclass with a personal performance enthralling us all with her greatness. She had seven students perform in the class, but she was very strict with time. Rather than trying to teach many things to each student, she chose one thing to teach each of the students, keeping the performance times under control. Between each performance she would expound upon what she taught that student explaining her philosophy on the matter in greater detail, and when there was time, she would also share details about herself. She was personable and funny, willing to be herself in front of us which gave the

masterclass an intimate quality. She used the student performances to talk not only about technical things that can inform musical things, but she also talked about style and gave the students suggestions on what to think about before beginning and sometimes while playing. She was insightful, articulate, organized, and kind; she used a variety of teaching methods, changing them to fit the different students and to fit the different music that the students performed. At the end of the class, rather than taking questions, she saved time to talk about her philosophies in greater detail and to give us a list of her favorite philosophy books.

Emma was able to synthesize her personal style with her knowledge about the instrument and the repertoire and ways of being a good teacher. She listened to the students and improvised things for them to practice, she worked with the students, but not to the detriment of the audience; keeping the class unified and interested. She told funny stories and used all means at her disposal to convey her point, including making fun of herself, demonstrating, talking, playing piano, singing, and inventing other means where she saw an opportunity. She was comfortable and entertaining, and she gave the ideal masterclass.

In all of these scenarios each master had a particular personal teaching style. Each master had a different perspective from which she viewed the musical material. Some are better at recognizing that there are many ways to play a specific piece, and others are better at describing to the student what to try. Some are eager and helpful, others are dismissive and grumpy. Most could have benefited from some thoughtful instruction or feedback when they first began to give masterclasses. Many of the masters that I observed have found their niche and quite

successfully balance improvisatorial teaching with public lecture and public demonstration. Others could improve in one or more areas.

The best masterclasses all had some common elements. First: when the master was personable and positive, the whole class was better. Second: when the master kept the class organized and on a strict time schedule, the teaching was better and the master was free to work within that schedule. Third: the master interacting with the students and the audience comfortably and being a good communicator helped everyone in the class learn more. Fourth: masters who look for any means by which to teach are able to get their point across, and they are more entertaining while teaching, making the class more memorable.

## Chapter Five: Some Suggestions for Improving Masterclasses

This chapter contains plans for the future of masterclasses. It proposes possible changes in university and class curricula, and presents designs on a program for starting and keeping masterclass, and a training program for masters. This includes a preliminary teaching handbook and some models for masterclass organization.

### Curriculum Changes

University masterclasses should to be treated with as much importance as regular, periodic classes. Masterclasses are often treated as something that is only peripheral to private lessons. Registering for masterclass could help with this stigma. It reminds students that masterclasses are important and assures that the schedules are public and known to the students. Individual schools, according to their own needs may require the class for zero-credits or substitute-credit registration. Often, grades for masterclasses are reflected in applied lesson grades. Teachers do this to varying degrees, but, generally, the masterclass portion weighs lightly into applied lesson grades, if at all. Ideally, masterclasses would be graded separately.

Masters need feedback from audiences and students to make the class as effective as possible. At the end of each class, the master could request a “one minute paper.”<sup>122</sup> This is an exercise in which masters reserve one minute at the end

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<sup>122</sup> Donald Kennedy, *Academic Duty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 77.



of class for students to write a spontaneous essay. These responses can be prompted with questions such as: “What was the most important point of the class?”, or “What was unclear in the lecture?”, or “What topics would you like to discuss in masterclasses?”, or “What was your favorite part of the class?” These are some suggestions, but any writing helps the students reflect on what they learned and be more engaged during the class. It can be an easy way for the master to get some rare feedback on her conduct of the masterclass and can illuminate areas of difficulty that might be unexpected.<sup>123</sup>

### **Masterclass Community**

Masterclasses could create a community of truth as described by Parker J. Palmer. In such a community, the subject matter is always kept at the center of teaching and everyone can learn from it and from each other.<sup>124</sup> Applying the subject matter as soon as possible helps students learn material faster than in a theoretical discussion first-application later approach. This is why masterclasses are so important; they are one of the few learning environments where students can bring all of their learning together, synthesize it, and apply it all at once.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Kennedy, *Academic Duty*, 77.

<sup>124</sup> Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 100-102. This model of learning through a community of truth is opposed to an older way of thinking where an expert imparted knowledge upon amateurs.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 100, 102.

## Hybrid Masterclass

Masterclasses usually focus on performance, but they often deemphasize cognitive learning. In masterclass learning and application can be simultaneous. Masters should formulate a four year plan for masterclasses so that all students access as much information as possible without excessive repetition. Such a schedule could incorporate performances of much major solo literature, ensemble literature, and excerpts. These classes can incorporate appropriate context such as historical instruments when appropriate to the work. Masterclasses could then be a place to bring together other areas of music study, bringing together music history and theory as it is relevant for your instrument. For instance, music history classes discuss music by Telemann, but not his horn music or most solo literature because it is not his most significant contribution to music history. Masterclass could study these works that are significant to individual instrument groups, but are less significant to the larger picture of music history. Masterclasses could fit works into historical context and also study the same works from a theoretical point of view, ultimately for insight into playing the pieces. This line of study provides a much more informed audience, capable of useful criticism. At the end of such a four year plan, an undergraduate would have a more complete perspective of literature specific to their instrument as well as performance knowledge of many of the works, having performed many of them. This plan applies similarly to excerpts. Students could learn about the context of the excerpt within the symphony or opera and talk about common practices for playing the excerpt in an audition or a performance setting. The class would listen to several different students perform the same

excerpt in order to compare styles, and have part of the class dedicated to practicing auditioning and practicing performing. A masterclass such as this is hybrid of a history and literature class, an excerpt class, an auditioning class, and a performance class. Putting all of these things together could help the class have a broad range of knowledge about the instrument, all of its literature, and how to prepare themselves for what musicians do practically: perform.<sup>126</sup>

Any extended plan for masterclasses, including a four year plan, must be structurally flexible, allowing room for students to follow a path of their own interests.<sup>127</sup> One important objective is to empower students to question other students and masters. This can be done by using the problem-posing method as Ira Shor presents it. In the classroom we need to create a community of truth where each student and audience member can learn from each other, and there is a free flow of ideas and respect for the other students and their ideas. In this type of discourse, the master becomes an example, showing respect for the ideas of others and for how the audience members and students treat each other.<sup>128</sup>

Masterclasses provide opportunities for students to practice giving presentations. A masterclass could include a student-prepared short speech about

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<sup>126</sup> Ira Shor, *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), Chapter 5. Students need the ability to make broad connections between different subjects studied, and they need to participate by asking questions specifically by asking what is left out of history books. Students should be able to relate the subject material to their own experiences, and help guide their knowledge of the subject area.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 7. Students need to share in the responsibility for their own learning. It cannot be the teacher just feeding them information, because that creates a passive student, and one who is not willing to question or to find their own information.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 9. Ira Shor's method for transformative discourse is a problem posing method which involves posing a problem, reflection by the students, discussion, essay composition, small group discussion about the essays, teacher observation, more writing by the students, integration of materials, class evaluation and a dialogic lecture by the teacher responding to the writings by the students.

the piece they are going to perform. This speech could be given by the performing student or by an assisting student. Alternatively, two students could collaborate to give a short demonstration before the performance. This would help all of the students know a work better, and it could put a work into a large context, historically, theoretically, and artistically. This type of presentation frames music, for students, in a practical context. Rather than only knowing about the large forms such as symphonies and opera with a few string quartets and piano concertos, which are the focus of music history classes, they could also know about their own instruments chamber works, concertos, and unaccompanied works. Learning how to give presentations and collaborating with performers on a small scale is a first step to helping students know how to conduct a masterclass of their own.

### **Performance Practice Masterclass**

Student performances should still be the main focus of masterclasses. Masterclasses are one the few places to practice performing. Student performances are the impetus for class discussion and the starting place for teaching. Audition practice is another focus of masterclasses. Considering the rigors of the modern audition process, a place to practice auditioning is essential. Entire masterclasses should be dedicated to practicing all aspects of the audition process. The repertoire may vary; the point is for each student to practice the process of auditioning. The elements of an audition situation can be strange and uninviting, such as facing a curtain or a temporary wall when entering a room or the disembodied voices of the judges from behind the curtain. Practicing among these elements is essential, and

can easily be done in a masterclass setting. Certain masterclasses can recreate the entire process with class members rotating between the various roles, such as auditioning, judging, proctoring, and organizing. Letting the students experience these other roles can help them identify with their counterparts when at an actual audition. This type of audition masterclass could be incorporated into the regular masterclass schedule, or added as a special audition only session.

Masters should give presentations in the form of prepared speeches and give her own performances for the class. She should start each semester with her own presentation and accompanying performance to show the students how these presentations can be and to give them something for which to strive. In addition to either the student or the master presentation and performance, there should be time for multiple student performances with critique and some class discussion. The master should be flexible to keep everything moving. There does not have to be a presentation in every masterclass, although there could be. The master could choose to use this time for a speech of her own on a related topic, or it could be time for class discussion. The point is to design an adaptable class that will keep the interest of the students.

### **A place to learn to teach**

Masterclasses can also be practica. One of the problems that masterclass teachers encounter is that they generally don't have any instruction or direction in how to teach a masterclass. Masterclasses can be a forum for practicing teaching. Masters could give students a chance to give a masterclass taking on the role of a

mentor such as in a conducting masterclass.<sup>129</sup> The student teacher can generally give the masterclass on her own, but the master could give her examples of what to prepare before the class, and could give pointers to the student master during the class as well. This is the one place where it is possible for students to practice giving a masterclass before they are in the professional world and no longer have an opportunity to get some guidance in how to teach a masterclass. In this way the masterclass can bridge the gap between the professional world and the university world, both in performance and in teaching.<sup>130</sup>

### **Scheduling and Attendance**

Attendance is frequently an issue with weekly masterclasses. Students have so many other commitments, and often don't view masterclass as a firm obligation. It is just something that they should try to attend if possible. Other things end up taking precedence for the students. They might have work or family obligations. They might have other classes or ensembles that sometimes conflict. Putting masterclasses at a time that works well for most students and faculty is essential. It should not be added at the end of the day as an afterthought. Some schools put masterclasses in the morning to help combat this problem. Other schools have the luxury of having two-hour masterclass twice a week. Both of these ideas have merit. If masterclasses were, for example, 9am-11am on Monday and Wednesday, then the

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<sup>129</sup> Karen Ruhleder and Fred Stoltzfus, "The Etiquette of the Master Class: Improvisation on a Theme by Howard Becker" *Mind, Culture and Activity*, No.7 (2000): 186-196.

<sup>130</sup> Donald A. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988), 305-308.

first hour could be dedicated to student presentations and performances, critiques and teaching the students how to teach, and the second hour could be dedicated to practicing auditioning and excerpt class. It can be split any way the master likes, but having enough time to make masterclass a central part of instrumental learning rather than relying mostly on private lessons would benefit the students. Students would attain a well-rounded education specifically for their instrument. The single-minded focus of private lessons teaching limits student learning to the realm of private lessons. In a masterclass the students can learn from what others are doing in their private lessons, and the master can explain some things only once rather than repeating herself in each lesson.

Another reason that students do not go to masterclass is because they are bored, or they do not feel like they will learn anything important. If they are more advanced students, perhaps they have heard the same excerpts performed and critiqued many, many times and they are no longer interested. This is a situation where it could help to have these students learn how to teach masterclasses and help get them actively engaged in the proceedings of the class. They could see these same excerpts from a different perspective. Having to teach them is a lot different than observing them. Another thing that could help keep students engaged is to prepare a four-year syllabus/plan for masterclasses. This can help the master keep track of what she has covered as to not repeat herself each year. A four-year rotation is important because the four-year undergraduates will get a complete scope of masterclass material before they graduate. If there are graduate students, then the master can assign them directed research to fill in the material that is left out.

Making the masterclass more rigorous will help students attend masterclass by insuring that they will miss something vital if they miss class.

### **Masterclass Plans**

There are various ways a master can organize a four-year masterclass plan. In a four-year syllabus the master might break the class into semesters and decide what music to cover each semester. The master might decide to organize the music based on era, dedicating consecutive semesters to music from different periods of time, including solo, orchestral, and chamber music. One semester could be formatted around Baroque music and the next to Classical music. Romantic music could encompass two semesters because of the large amount of orchestral music. One semester could be for music from 1900 until the present, and another semester for unaccompanied music. The master could reserve one semester for discussing other topics such as instrument maintenance, performance etiquette, studio competitions, distraction classes, or anything that the master of her students might dream up. The master might also subdivide the semesters by genre, or use the form based on era interjecting discussion classes into the form.

### **Conclusion**

In chapter one, I wrote about the physical characteristics of masterclasses. I wrote about how masters are distinguished by their knowledge, teaching, and setting the ideal standard in their area. Students and audience members learn from the master through the masters' teaching on the frame experiments of the student



performances. I wrote about the flexible space required for the class to meet, and how the master can use that space in different ways to create the needed environment.

In chapter two, I wrote about the roles assumed by the master, students, and audience and how they interact to construct this environment. The challenges of being and becoming a master and how a master's personal style informs her teaching style as well as the mood and interactions of the class are some of the ideological components that I address. Masterclass interactions are based on unknown factors of student performances and audience interaction, but masters can keep the class organized by making sure all of the elements are practical, applicable and flexible. The master can transform the class into a community to promote interpersonal relationships and an enhanced learning environment.

In chapter three, I wrote about hope and what is possible and what is practical in education. I considered many pedagogical philosophies and reflected upon how they relate to masterclasses in particular. I looked for ways for masters to help students find their own paths and to engage in their own education. I wrote about how eloquence can be attained through following basics of public speaking, and about how learning about and implementing teaching philosophies can help masters find their own, new ways to teach.

In chapter four, I wrote about twelve of the masterclasses that I observed and how the masters in each of those scenarios dealt with masterclass settings differently. In the best masterclasses, the master clearly controlled of the pacing, scope, and audience interactions, while teaching the students in an improvised

manner, speaking to everyone and talking about performing from personal experience.

In chapter five, I wrote about how masters can reach beyond the current convention of masterclasses and create many different types of classes in which students and audience interact for the benefit of both.

In *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design and Learning in the Professions*, Schön suggests that teaching the next generation how to teach is best done in a practicum class. This type of practicum class, in which students learn how to teach in a controlled setting, with the instruction of a master, can help the student bridge the worlds between the university and professional.<sup>131</sup> The future of masterclasses lies in the direction of finding new ways to teach, helping students critique their own performances, and creating a practicum environment to show students how to teach.

Successful masterclasses have some elements in common. Organization of the class, public speaking within the class and interaction between the people in the class, and creating a community out of the class are the main elements of a successful masterclass. The master has a lot of control of the organization and the communication elements, and although she has less control over the creation of the community, she can begin the process of creating the ideal learning environment through her own personal example of professionalism and compassion.

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<sup>131</sup> Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 305-320.

## **Masterclass Planning**

Organizing a masterclass in a University setting is both long term planning and short term realization of the long term goals. Masters should create a four year masterclass plan for their studio that leaves room for special interests of the students and varies the format of classes to keep the students from finding the class too pedestrian. In addition to an overarching four year plan, masters can create a plan for each semester. This is helpful both for the master and the students. It helps the master address the minutia of each class they must teach as well as work out any problems with scheduling. In a guest setting, the master should have a specific message, but needs to be flexible and work well with the students. The guest master does not deal with long term organization, but does need to improvise based on what is expected in different settings.

## **Pacing the Masterclass**

A large part of keeping a masterclass organized is pacing the class. The master needs to pay attention to how quickly the class is moving. If the topics and demonstrations are keeping the interest of the audience, then the pacing is good. The master needs to be able to move along if the audience is losing interest, but take time if the audience is interested.

## **Audience Participation**

Audience participation can be a very tricky element for many masters. This is one of the main areas where masters lose the interest of the audience. Here are four guidelines to keep the audience interested:

1. Audience Participation is not required in a masterclass. If a master is not comfortable with asking the audience for their thoughts, she does not have to.

2. If the audience is not forthcoming with their comments, masters should not wait. This only stops the momentum of the class and allows time for the minds of the audience to wander.

3. All of the comments need to be heard by everyone if there is to be a discussion. The master can repeat the comment if the audience member does not speak loudly.

4. When the comments are directed at the student performing, the master can filter the comments for the student so that they are not confusing, and she can condense the various comments into a few coherent thoughts. This makes it easier for the performing student, and master, and the audience to understand the essential points of the discussion.

## **Public Speaking**

Public speaking can be very challenging. The master should follow some basic public speaking guidelines to get her point across in the most effective manner. She should be aware of and practice the fundamentals of public speaking in order to strive for eloquence. This is relevant for giving a lecture as a portion of the masterclass, but the fundamentals of it can be learned and used for improvised teaching with learning how to give impromptu speeches as well. Some basic public speaking guidelines are:

1. The master should prepare thoroughly as she would for any performance.
2. She should make the speech organized, logical, and coherent.
3. She should make sure that she can be heard by everyone, and that she speaks fluently and purposefully.
4. She should balance formality with a conversational style, and pay attention to the attentiveness of her audience.
5. She should practice until she is comfortable speaking, and eventually she should strive for eloquence in her speech.

## **Improvised Teaching**

In masterclasses most of the teaching is not done through prepared speeches, but through real-time analysis, experimentation, and implementation. Masters

demonstrate existing teaching techniques and improvise new ones to fit the situation and the student. They use their experience and imagination to create unique ways of teaching and learning.

## **Community**

Creating a learning community is the most challenging of these four masterclass elements. In order to create a community, masters can respect the students, initiate a dialogue with them, and create an environment of mutual respect. Each person is an important part of the masterclass community. The master shows the students how to use their imaginations to empathize with their colleagues, other cultures, and unfamiliar situations by doing this herself. The master needs to be aware of the mood she sets with her personal style. She needs to be truthful and honest with the students and the audience, as well as tactful, compassionate, patient, and enthusiastic. She can do all of this with integrity and the best interest of the student in mind, to create a fun, supportive learning environment through optimism and excitement. Masters need to perform for their students. The students all have to perform; it is only fair that the teacher performs as well. It also gives the students inspiration, comfort, and a performance goal. Creating a community out of a masterclass makes it a safe place for performance, learning, and conversation.

If a master is organized, pays attention to effective communication with the students and the audience, and strives to create a learning community within the

masterclass through dialogue and respect, then a master can consistently teach successful and inspirational masterclasses.

## **Appendix: Creating a Masterclass Syllabus**

This is intended to be a useful, working set of ideas. It is a fluid flexible form that can be changed or modified to accommodate specific students or the strengths and interests of other teachers. Ideally others who are in the process of designing their own masterclass programs might read this and find this research assemblage helpful. Designing the actual timeline and putting it on a calendar is the last step. Prior to fitting all of this work onto a calendar, one must decide the parameters of the class. Pondering a few questions can help in determining how a masterclass will be.

1. What do I wish I would have had in my own masterclasses as a student?
2. What could be helpful to students knowing that they are the future teachers, performers, and music lovers?
3. How can masterclasses connect all areas of music?

This is what I came up with:

I put this in the form of a four-year rotating plan to work with the most common undergraduate time frame, but this can be done in any way that best represents your ideas and the needs of your students. I realize that in doing this some students might have a bit of overlap, and others, master students in particular will miss half of the rotation. I think that I would overcome this in three ways. One, by giving the undergraduates who are doing a fifth year some extra opportunities in the class, treating them a little bit like master students. Two, the masters students would have



extra responsibility to perform more and perhaps have a teaching component of the class for them. Three, keep track of the repertoire, and topics list that will be covered after these students will theoretically have left and assign them some extra projects based on these works and ideas.

### **Expectations**

Creating an ideal, inclusive teaching that focuses on interaction, collaboration, discussion, and inclusiveness is my main goal with this class. Ways of actually accomplishing this are a little bit intangible, but the ideas for it come from my chapter on pedagogical ideas. There are many ways of creating this kind of space based on the strengths of the teacher, but they ought to be thought out and filtered through a lens of compassion and inclusion.

### **Topics**

Masterclasses are commonly focused on performance areas, but are not limited to them. The topic can be about etiquette for recitals, auditions and performances, instrument maintenance, acoustics, breathing, relaxation techniques for performance, new ways of concentration, and different kinds of intonation, different types of tonguing, how to get a job, how to keep a job, and how to tailor your excerpts for the audience. Sometimes the topic can be things that everyone can practice together, like a daily routine, or a way of breathing. Masterclasses are also a

good place for students to practice teaching. This can give students the opportunity to practice teaching in an environment where they can get some feedback and helpful hints from a master and their own colleagues. Masterclasses can cover an enormous range of topics which are really limitless. Students will have some ideas of their own, and I will leave a bit of time when I put this into a timeline to accommodate their ideas.

### **Repertoire**

The repertoire list can be as inclusive or exclusive as you like. It can be based on the most commonly performed pieces, or those most commonly asked for on auditions. This is not a rigid list. The teacher can change it to accommodate the interests of specific students, such as time to hear recital and audition music. My list is quite inclusive with orchestral excerpts, opera excerpts, military band excerpts, chamber music, solo repertoire, and unaccompanied music.

I specifically tried to not organize my syllabus by era. Rather, I organized it by prevalence of the work. Interspersing major, commonly performed works with things that are a little more obscure seemed to be a good way to keep the classes diverse and interesting. I could have also organized by era, by country, or genre. It might look something like: Opera semester, Solo semester, Unaccompanied semester, Symphonic semester, Chamber Music semester. Or by country it might look: French, German, Russian and Italian, English, and American. Perhaps I could

have created a musical micro terrarium each semester where we could explore different musical paths and connections each time through.

### **Conclusion**

The last step will be to put what you have decided to do in a timeline that fits with the schedule of your school and the needs of your students. Then, take all of your creativity, patience, compassion, organization, and music-making skills to fashion the best learning environment that you possibly can.

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